

Culturally Contextualized Support for Unaccompanied Refugee Children in Mantapala

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**Some names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.*

Keywords: unaccompanied refugee children, Zambia, DRC, culturally contextualized interventions, cultural identity, coping, resilience, cultural competence, post-migration, children of migration, and acculturation

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BIA: Best Interests Assessment

BID: Best Interests Determination

CBO: Community Based Organizations

CRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

CRRF: Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

FTR: Family Tracing and Reunification (also Family Tracing and Reintegration)

IDP: Internally Displaced People

IASC: Inter-Agency Standing Committee

IRCS: International Red Cross Society

LRA: Lord's Resistance Army

MHPSS: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

NGO: Non-governmental Organization

UN: United Nations

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UASC: Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

URC: Unaccompanied Refugee Children

URM: Unaccompanied Refugee Minors

ZRCS: Zambia Red Cross Society

Chapter 1: Problem Formulation

1.1 Introduction

Every day unaccompanied refugee children (URC) face profound decisions of survival by defying some of the most unforgivable injustices a childhood can offer. Destitute physically, psychologically, and culturally, unaccompanied minors are an exceptional group of children in that they are drastically affected by an intersection of risk factors that extend across many moving variables. American civil rights advocate, Kimberlé Crenshaw, uses the term intersectionality to describe the deep levels of injustice vulnerable populations face (“What is Intersectionality?” 0:13). Such is true for URC as they are often compounded by obstacles that “are not understood within conventional ways of thinking” (“The Urgency of Intersectionality” 0:10). When considering the best approach to protect and support URC, it is imperative to recognize this group not only as *refugees*, forced into unimaginably dangerous routes of migration, but more eminently as *children*, enduring such suffering alone, detached from the security of a familiar culture or community. As if fleeing life-threatening dangers, crossing borders through deadly pathways, and being threatened by ruthless traffickers wasn’t enough torment, the intersection in which the misfortunes of refugee youth collide are further contested by the disconnect from a strong ethnic identity that can often lead to bicultural confusion and extreme cultural isolation.

Typically, the powerful phenomenon of culture serves as a portal that connects generations of tradition and history to shape a child’s authentic interpretation of his or her belief systems, social structures, and cultural values. Yet, for unaccompanied refugee children maturing in varying cultural contexts, their cultural identities and perspectives take form detached from a relative culture, and instead, through the pieces and fragments of the cultures they are exposed to

along their migration journeys. Thus, the separating and binding experience of an unaccompanied minor distinguishes culture as “not a mere variable in human cognition but a major generative force” (Boyden and Mann 20). Organizations taking on the significantly complex responsibility to support and protect unaccompanied refugee youth must acknowledge that the distinct cultural attachments, or rather, detachments, with which URC identify provide the most central, guiding context that impacts the URC’s ability to cope during their acculturation process.

Recognizing the powerful influence of culture reveals the ultimate discrepancy – all refugee youth are not marginalized by the same obstacles, and therefore, they require altered approaches of support depending on their specific cultural associations *and* their incomparable migration experiences. When we succeed in connecting with and understanding the unique needs of youth migrating from a range of conflict-affected backgrounds and cultures, relevant organizations can provide more effective strategies to support the cross-cultural stresses that URC often experience during their resettlement process. It is crucial that support systems avoid an overgeneralized “one size fits all” policy, but instead focus exclusively on the distinct cross-cultural identities of each child (Boyden and Mann 21).

Through a specific lens that recognizes culture’s distinctive role in how an unaccompanied refugee child is able to cope with his or her traumatic migration experiences, this thesis will examine appropriate safeguarding procedures and psychosocial practices supporting URC resettled in Mantapala, a permanent settlement site in northern Zambia. Concentrating on the effectiveness of current program development for URC from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) migrating into Zambia’s Mantapala, I will investigate the unique cultural experiences of URC exposed to diverse cultures and environments during

their pre-migration, migration, and post-migration phases. This thesis will also examine Hofstede's Six Dimensions of National Culture to better understand the shifting cultural patterns that URC, challenged by integrated cultural identities, often face. Furthermore, I will assess coping behaviors through a cultural lens and expound on the power of resilience to better develop our understanding of how to create effective and culturally appropriate child protection methods. From my extensive research and first-hand experience in Mantapala, I argue that culturally contextualized interventions are necessary to properly serve unaccompanied refugee children navigating through intercultural contexts.

1.2 Research Methods

Conducting research in a culture dissimilar from my own, I found that “intensive and sustained immersion” within the study group was necessary to learn first-hand about the extraordinary challenges of URC (Merriam and Tisdell 30). Only after direct observation of local ethnic traditions, cultural norms, and behavioral patterns of refugee youth in Mantapala, might I then be able to generate an authentic cultural interpretation of the organizational safeguards needed for URC in that region of Africa (Merriam and Tisdell 29). Thus, in June 2018, fully trusting that “position, perspective, and context are always involved in the production of knowledge”, I journeyed to Zambia to conduct the following ethnographic study of unaccompanied refugee children (URC) in Mantapala (Holmes 200). While in Mantapala, a permanent settlement site bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), I intended to gain insight of the following: how were URC being protected and cared for, what was the effectiveness of existing organizational programming, was there a concentration on cultural context for support and recovery initiatives, and what were the positive organizational measures that implemented sustainable, long-term alternatives for URC.

Ethnography is a method of data collection that allows a researcher to become deeply immersed within a culture, to minimize their personal biases, and to learn from the intimate perspective of the participants themselves (Merriam and Tisdell 29; Stringer 140). Within this qualitative approach, “the research is done *with* the people, not *on* or *about* them” (Stringer 220). To equip myself with the information and awareness needed for this form of analysis, I first studied the works of Seth Holmes, a respected and celebrated anthropologist. Holmes embodies the true essence of authentic ethnographic research; his dedication to understanding the wide-ranging forms of discrimination and suffering that Mexican migrants experience, led him to fully immerse himself in the challenging life of an indigenous farmworker. Although my own ethnographic approach did not take on such extreme measures as Holmes’ study, my research was inspired by his all-embracing principle: “the ethnography of suffering and migration would be incomplete without witnessing firsthand such an important site of suffering” (9). While interventions for unaccompanied refugee children are evolving, those who seek to support this intercultural population cannot fully comprehend their credible realities without first hearing of their exceptional challenges from their own viewpoints.

My research has been inspired by the stories and experiences of the brave and courageous refugee youth I have met along my thesis journey. In fact, my study’s most significant ethnographic findings evolved from my own intimate relationships, cultural exchanges, and face-to-face interactions with refugee youth in Mantapala. My aim is to honor their voices and match their fearlessness so that together we can develop critical, culturally appropriate development strategies to support these vulnerable youth. As Seth Holmes so powerfully expresses, “It is my hope that those who read these pages will be moved in mutual humanity” (29). By using data gathered from a mixed methods approach including surveys, in-

depth interviews, participant observations, and informal discussions with workers and refugees in Mantapala, this ethnographic study argues the need for more culturally contextualized support systems for unaccompanied refugee children.

1.3 Impetus for Research

It deeply grieves me to think anyone, let alone a young, unaccompanied child, might feel so hopeless that he or she must make the choice to cross unimaginably life-threatening routes of migration alone. I have always been deeply connected to those who feel outcast, a loner, or castaway, those at their most isolated and dejected state with nothing to lose. There is a powerful essence embodied in individuals stripped of their freedoms, and support systems, and cultural identity, yet, still fight so fiercely for life. How does a child stay hopeful when exposed to such desolate suffering and cultural disconnect? A Zambian friend I shared a meal with along my research journey said to me, “Maybe being hopeless is a privilege that these children simply don’t have” (Chanda). I was still wrestling to understand this concept of hopelessness when on one of my first days in Mantapala, I met Mutiti, an extraordinary ten-year-old Congolese refugee. Unbeknownst to Mutiti, the lessons I learned from our short-lived friendship changed the course of my thesis and transformed my perception as a humanitarian seeking to learn the most effective ways to support marginalized refugee youth. Ultimately, my interactions with Mutiti provided me with critical, interpersonal insight so that I could better understand the complex dynamics involved in a lone refugee child’s determination to overcome the adversities of forced migration.

I met Mutiti in the schoolyard in Mantapala. Because the proposed school building was still under construction, classes were currently being held outside in the bush. Sectioned off into age-specific groups, classes of children assembled in circles on the ground or on wooden logs,

while teachers wrote on makeshift chalkboards leaning against trees. With the help of a Save the Children volunteer, I gathered a group of about 25 unaccompanied refugee youth ranging from 8 – 18 years of age. When I approached Mutiti, he was sitting off on his own, dismal and distracted in a daydream or, more accurately, a day terror. He was covered in dirt and wore a shredded t-shirt that was barely held together by loose seams; noticeably re-sewn multiple times over. His shorts were many sizes too big, held up by a string around his belt loops, and his worn-down flip-flops were missing most of the soles. Like most kids in Mantapala, it was evident he had seen too much of this unrelenting world. Apprehensive at first, he finally took my hand and followed me to the circle of youth I had gathered in a forest clearing away from the rest of the school children.

I intended to facilitate a focus group to examine trauma's impact on the resettlement of URC in Mantapala. Through the interpretation of Chanda Everisto, Assistant Programmes Officer at Caritas Mansa, we would discuss how it effects each person differently, as our minds and bodies develop coping mechanisms from the trauma we experience. Before jumping into a such a heavy discussion, it was important to first create a safe space where the children would feel comfortable to disconnect from the outward stresses of refugee resettlement, and turn inward to reflect on their own personal thoughts and feelings. I hoped that by first building physical trust, they would feel open to sharing more intimate reflections. We began with some dynamic yoga movements (See fig. 1). As most of the children had never done this activity before, they were all giggles, especially as Chanda attempted to mirror my movements and translate the seemingly, silly breathing techniques I was demonstrating. Mutiti was silent and focused, imitating each of my movements earnestly. After getting to know each other through intentional movement, body awareness, and breathing techniques, we competed in physical challenges

including pushups and headstands. Eventually, we settled into our deep discussion about trauma and healing.

Figure 1:

Healing Through Yoga and Physical Movement



Everisto, Chanda. Photographer. *Healing Through Yoga and Physical Movement*, Mantapala Focus Group, 13 July 2018.

While the full discussion was instrumental to my research, the most significant takeaway was exposed during the concluding activity when I handed each child two sheets of blank paper and a pen. I then instructed the children to create two drawings; one, of a past memory that had shaped the person they presently identified with, and the second, to illustrate goals, dreams, or aspirations they projected in their futures. My aim for the activity was for the children to acknowledge their personal strengths that had guided them in overcoming such adversity, while also providing them with hope and excitement for the opportunities that lay ahead. Figure 2 is Mutiti's drawing of what he remembered from his past:

Figure 2:

Village Violence in the DRC



Mutiti Tchola, *Village Violence in the DRC*, Mantapala Focus Group, photographed by Jesse Nathanson, 13 July 2018.

As Mutiti calmly told the story of how rebels invaded his village, he remained emotionless, his voice firm and unwavering. He spoke of the terror of seeing his parents killed and of the chaos surrounding him as he ran from his childhood home engulfed in flames. I was completely overcome by his resilient strength in the face of such severe injustices. Even though

the detailed drawing illustrated rebels¹ brutally slaughtering and mutilating Mutiti's loved ones, when describing the memory, his composed demeanor exuded fearlessness. Mutiti went on to explain that children in his village near the Haut Katanga Province in Congo were taught at a young age to be cautious of rebels as they often abducted children for guerrilla training, sold as sex and labor slaves, or forced to be front line soldiers (Pike).

As each child described his or her picture of equally gruesome fatalities, it became evident that all the children in the circle had shared a similar experience. I, alone, looked on in dismay as each child's memory unfolded in even more violent and cruel ways. Mutiti's description of watching these atrocities unfold was heartbreaking to hear, but for him, it had normalized as the way of the world; the trauma was simply something the people in his culture had to accept. The dehumanizing experiences of trauma, loss, and death form the culture with which these children now identify – a culture accustomed to life-fearing, regular occurrences of violent attacks and witnessing the death of loved ones. It was as if with every village they crossed or with every loved one they lost, their distinctive characters and heritage cultural connections became mired in the stories of their past lives until they were unable to identify themselves separate from the trauma.

This profound moment with Mutiti and the other powerfully brave children guided me to a critical realization that has inspired the development of this research study: an unaccompanied refugee child's unique, culturally contextualized identity has a significant influence in how he or she interprets trauma. Therefore, acknowledging cultural diversity is essential for effective program development that seeks to understand the multifaceted needs of URC in Mantapala.

¹ Relentless rebel groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) engaging in extraordinary human rights violations such as rape, torture, mass abduction of children, and facial mutilations are common to conflict-affected regions in Africa including the DRC, Central Africa Republic (CAR), South Sudan, and Uganda. Children are one of the most affected population threatened by such hateful acts of injustice. See <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/lra.htm>.

Mutiti's unceasing courage has helped shape my thesis process to understand the genuine needs of unaccompanied refugee youth during resettlement.

1.4 Definitions of Terms and Concepts

The vocabulary used to describe the different classifications of unaccompanied youth are often used interchangeably. Therefore, this section will provide clear, well-defined descriptions of the terms and concepts that will be used throughout this thesis.

A Child, Youth, or Minor

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines a child or minor as a "human being below the age of 18" ("Child Migrants").

Children on the Move, Uprooted Children, or Children of Migration

These terms are interchangeable, and each is used to recognize international child migrants, refugee youth and asylum seekers, and internally displaced children, as well as, separated or unaccompanied refugee children ("Children on the Move: Key Facts and Figures").

Unaccompanied Refugee Children (URC)

When children become separated from parents or caregivers during an armed conflict or disaster, they are frequently referred to as *separated* or *unaccompanied* rather than *orphans* as their status is seldom immediately known (Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children 13). The UN High Commissioner for Children defines unaccompanied children (or unaccompanied minors) as "children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so" ("Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children"). This separation includes that from both the child's nuclear and extended family, which leaves him/her completely uncared for by an adult ("Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and

Separated Children”). Additionally, there is a category referring to youth as *accompanied-non-accompanied*, which means the youth are in fact traveling with an adult; however, the relationship with the adult is “uncertain or defined by child marriage” (“Child Migrants”).

Separated Children

This term describes children who have become separated from both parents, or from former caregivers, but not necessarily from other adult relatives. Therefore, the term *separated children* can refer to children accompanied by other extended family members (Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children 13).

1.5 Problem Statement

Before giving an overview of my research findings in Mantapala, it is important to first understand how our advancing global migration crisis is particularly impacting unaccompanied minors. The following section will first examine URC from a global perspective and then narrow the lens to explore migration’s impact specifically on refugee youth in regions of sub-Saharan² Africa, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). By studying the DRC’s deeply-rooted, internal conflict, we can begin to understand why refugee youth are becoming unaccompanied and also determine the genuine needs of youth fleeing from this region. Finally, I will assess Zambia’s refugee response approach to explain why URC are migrating particularly into Zambia. Ultimately, having this information will help organizations to discover how to implement improved contextualized support programs for URC.

Global Scope

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, the number of people around the world facing injustice due to war, exploitation, human rights violations, persecution, or social

² Sub-Saharan Africa is a term commonly used to describe countries located south of the Saharan desert. See <https://study.com/academy/lesson/sub-saharan-africa-people-culture.html>

and political instability has drastically increased over the last decade “from 33.9 million in 1997 to 65.6 million in 2017” (Fathi et al. 1). Today, the total peaks at an estimated 68.5 million unprotected people experiencing such callous and inhumane dangers in their own communities that they are either choosing to or being forced to migrate and risk potential exploitation and life-threatening danger (Global Trends 4). Now representing over half of the refugee population, individuals under the age of 18 have quickly become the most vulnerable to the brutal forces of migration (McKenna and Hoban). Subsequently, reports reveal there were at least 300,000³ unaccompanied and separated children in 2015 and 2016, a near fivefold increase from the 66,000 documented in 2010 and 2011 (“Children on the Move: Key Facts and Figures”). Former president Barack Obama describes this unsettling crisis as “a test of our common humanity” (Momodu). In what is arguably the world’s highest level of displacement in history since WWII, countries are grappling with how to effectively host such large influxes of unprotected children (“UNICEF: 300,000 Refugee Children Traveling Unaccompanied” 0:44).

Narrowing In: Unaccompanied Minors in sub-Saharan Africa

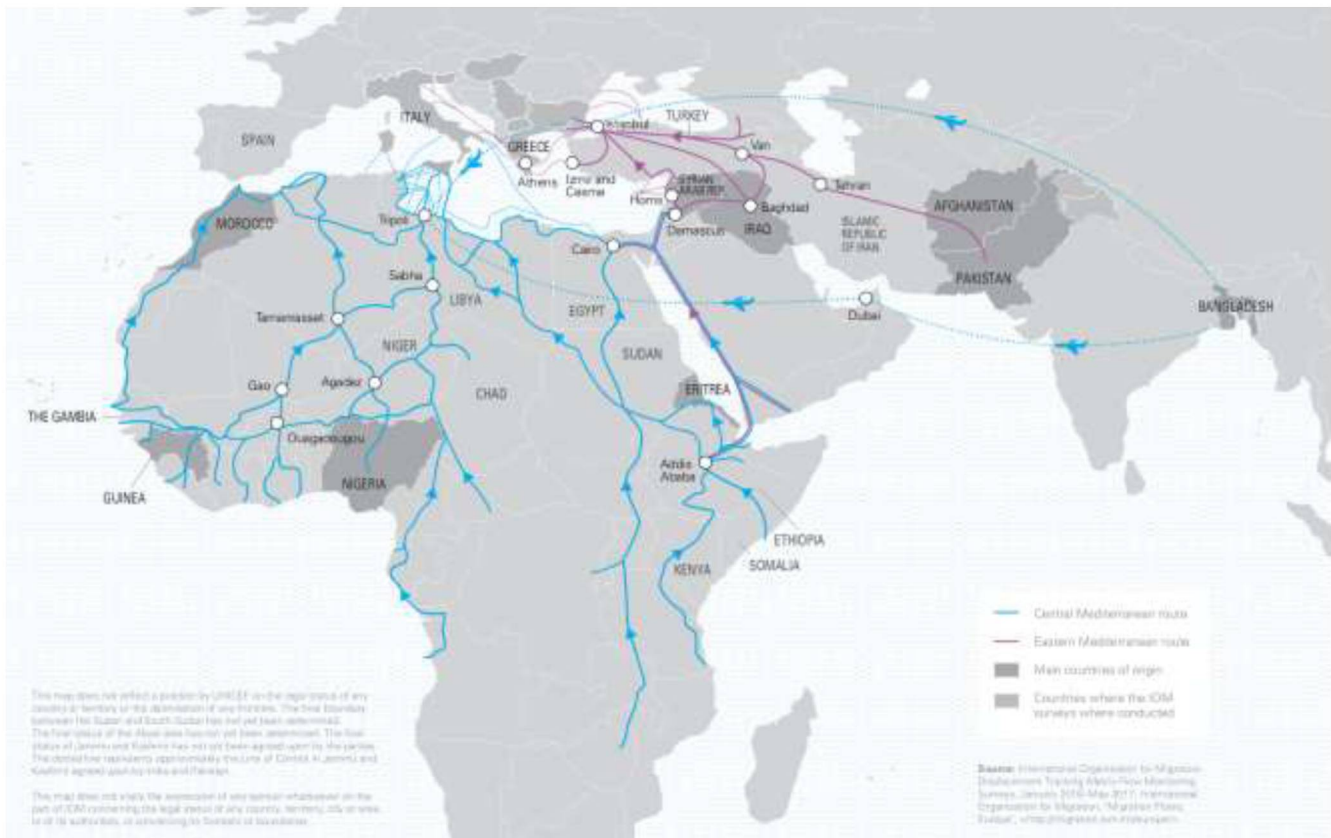
While nations around the world are challenged by such extraordinary influxes of refugees, Africa is most affected by this rapidly growing humanitarian crisis as the continent now hosts “80% of the world’s refugee population” (Momodu). Just in the Eastern and Southern regions of Africa alone, there are an estimated 17 million children in need of humanitarian assistance (“Eastern and Southern Africa”). Refugee youth displaced by ongoing conflict in these African regions face a migration experience that uprooted children from other cultural contexts may not share. For example, due to violence, poverty, and political instability, African refugee

³ Exact statistics representing unaccompanied refugee children worldwide are extremely challenging to regulate due to incomplete, unreliable or duplicated data, difficulty of correct age determination, and differing criteria for recording data. See <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/child-and-young-migrants>.

youth are more prone to major risk factors such as exploitation and sexual violence (Espinoza 1). This is not to imply that physical and psychosocial traumas aren't affecting refugee youth in other conflict-affected areas around the world but, rather to signify that they are largely prevalent for youth fleeing African territories via the Central Mediterranean⁴ migration route (See fig. 3).

Figure 3:

Two Main Migration Routes



⁴ The central Mediterranean route, from Sub-Saharan Africa to Italy, is one of the most active and dangerous, currently accounting for the largest number of people crossing to Europe by sea. Libya remains the main point of departure for the majority of refugees and migrants from Africa seeking to reach Europe. See <https://www.unhcr.org/5aa78775c.pdf>

“Two Main Migration Routes”, Harrowing *Journeys: Children and Youth on the Move Across the Mediterranean Sea, at Risk of Trafficking and Exploitation*. UNICEF, 11 Aug. 2017, pp. 17, www.unicef.org/publications/index_100621.html. Accessed 17 March 2019

For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, the frequency of youth exploited or coerced by sex traffickers, smugglers, or militia groups is considerably higher than in other conflict and post-conflict settings (See fig. 4) (Espinoza 1). Forcefully subjugated by Joseph Kony and his Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), minors in this region are more likely than any other youth population to be recruited to commit tortuous acts of violence as child soldiers and/or enslaved as sex workers, defenseless as they are forced to perform sexual acts no human should endure (Kanu 917).⁵ Children fleeing violence in the Congo often witness raids by militia rebel groups, have loved ones who were abducted as child-soldiers, or are subjected to sexual assault by rebel fighters (Kanu 93).

Studies show that a young boy travelling in a group along the Central Mediterranean route in sub-Saharan Africa faces a 73% risk of being exploited, while boys from other provinces are only at a 38% risk (“Children on the Move: Key Facts and Figures”). Moreover, UNICEF reports that 20% of victims who are trafficked are unaccompanied children, particularly from sub-Saharan Africa (“UNICEF: 300,000 Refugee Children Traveling Unaccompanied” 2:07). While rape is the most common act of violence reported, sexual violence also refers to “molestation, [being] forced to undress, [being] stripped of clothing, rape including gang rape, forced marriage, abduction, sexual slavery, and [being] forced to perform sexual acts with another civilian” (Espinoza 1). These painful conceptions expose the explicit challenges for

⁵ The Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) is one of central Africa’s cruelest and most enduring armed groups. The LRA has abducted over 67,000 youth, including 30,000 children, for use as child soldiers, sex slaves, and porters, and has brutalized communities since its inception in 1987. See <https://enoughproject.org/conflicts/lra>.

youth in these rural areas to learn how to navigate through and heal from such brutally dehumanizing experiences.

Figure 4:

Adolescents and Youth From sub-Saharan Africa are More Vulnerable to Trafficking and Exploitation Than Those from Other Regions



Source: International Organization for Migration, Displacement Tracking Matrix Flow Monitoring Surveys, January 2016–May 2017.

“Adolescents and Youth From sub-Saharan Africa are More Vulnerable to Trafficking and Exploitation Than Those from Other Regions”, *Harrowing Journeys: Children and Youth on the Move Across the Mediterranean Sea, at Risk of Trafficking and Exploitation*. UNICEF, 11 Aug. 2017, pp. 39, www.unicef.org/publications/index_100621.html. Accessed 17 March 2019.

Historical Context: Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

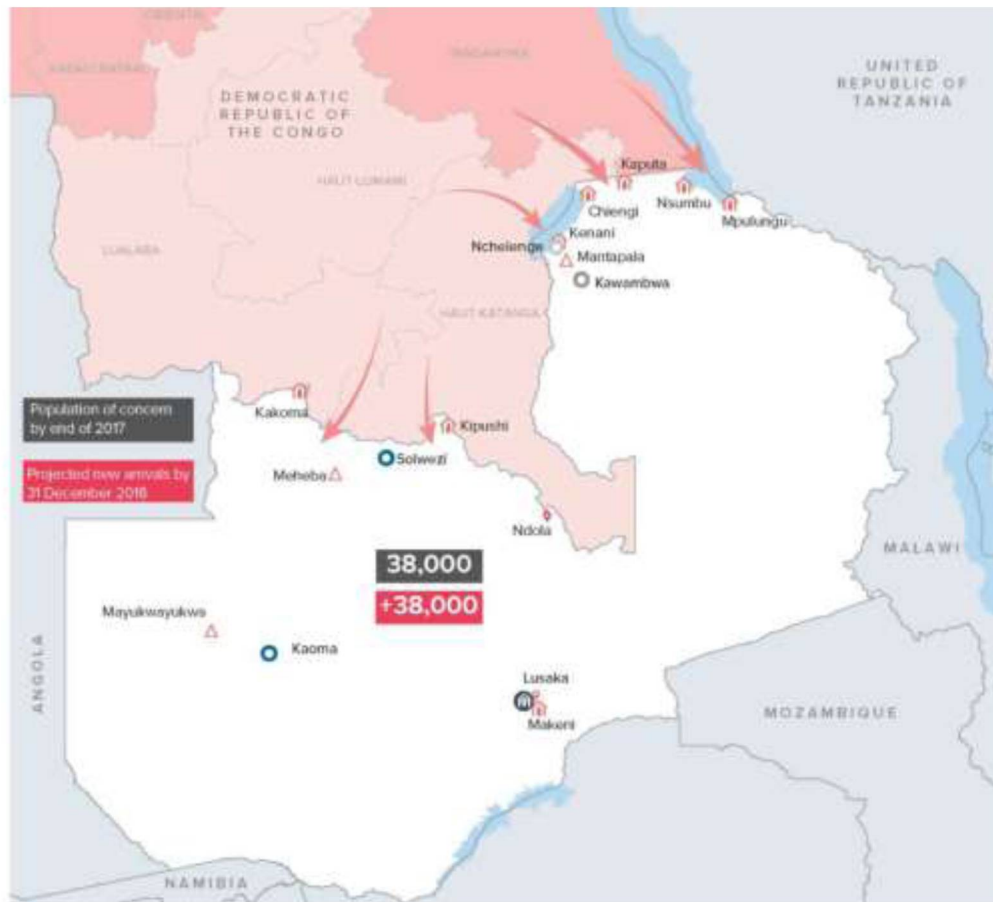
Standing as the second largest country in Africa, the DRC contains over 250 ethnic groups and spreads across a region larger than Spain, France, Germany, Sweden, and Norway combined (“Eastern Congo Initiative”). Although rich in natural resources such as diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, zinc, coltan (used in electronic devices) and cassiterite (used in food packaging), these potentials for positive country development have rather served as a divergence

for warlords, corrupt government officials, and militia rebel groups fighting and dividing over minerals (“Q&A: DR Congo Conflict”). With such a sizeable country and a populace so diverse, widespread, and severely impoverished, one can begin to understand the groundwork for a country deeply crippled by violent conflict, protracted political instability, and inter-country division (Jones). The exact cause of the nation’s overarching conflict is difficult to pinpoint as it is derived by a complex, interconnected web of instability that further extends into bordering nations such as Rwanda and Uganda as well (Prendergast). Still, the drivers of conflict can ultimately break down into three groups: political (power), economic (money) and military (resources) (Prendergast). Between the cultural clashing of power at both local and national levels and the government’s divided decree of ruling, unending conflict, corruption, and disorder, predominantly in the Haut Katanga and Tanganyika Provinces, has prevailed within the nation (Prendergast).⁶ The primary concentration of this research study will focus on Congolese refugees fleeing from the DRC’s Haut Katanga and Tanganyika Provinces, crossing Zambia’s northern border into Nchelenge, and ultimately, resettling in Mantapala (See Fig. 5). Fig. 5 references Haut Katanga and Tanganyika to show the geographical location of these provinces. It also identifies the routes refugees in those regions most frequently use to migrate into Zambia. The red arrows illustrate the most widely used border crossing zones, and the red triangles represent the main refugee resettlements in Zambia.

⁶ Haut Katanga and Tanganyika Provinces are most heavily affected by the Congo’s political tension, and therefore, are the areas from which most refugees are fleeing. The conflict is largely due to the region’s extraordinary mineral wealth. See <http://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/democratic-republic-congo/katanga-tensions-drcs-mineral-heartland>

Figure 5:

Congolesse Situation



Congolese Situation. “*UNHCR*.” 2018. <http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2018%20Congolese%20Situation%20Supplementary%20Appeal%20-%20January-December%202018%20%28February%202018%29.pdf>. Accessed 1 Feb. 2019.

Referred to as “the rape capitol of the world” and the site of the deadliest war since WWII, the DRC has endured horrifying atrocities and unfathomable acts of injustice which have resulted in the death of over 5 million people between 1994 and 2003 (Jones; “Q&A: DR Congo Conflict”). As governments and organizations work to solve these alarming concerns within the nation, unimaginable acts of extortion, large-scale theft, exploitation, rape, kidnapping, mass

killings, and defilement by rebels, are threatening children caught in the crossfires of the nation's ongoing, inter-ethnic warfare (Stratton 44). Moreover, children make up a large population of the soldiers participating in these lethal massacres ("Child Soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo"). The violent war has prompted disturbing and barbaric evils, exposing children to acts of cannibalism, mutilation, and torture (Jones). Chanda Everisto, fieldwork interpreter from Caritas Mansa, explains that, "people are looking for a taste of peace but, here, there is no justice" (Everisto). Currently, there are 5.6 million children in need of humanitarian assistance in the DRC, including nearly 246,000 displaced children and more than 5,000 unaccompanied or separated from a parent or guardian ("Democratic Republic of Congo"). By the end of 2019, humanitarian programs expect considerable surges in these statistics, approximating 6,000 children associated with armed forces, 5,000 children victimized by gender-based violence, 8,000 URC needing appropriate family-based care, and 120,000 children requiring psychosocial support ("Democratic Republic of Congo"). Children become unaccompanied for many reasons, frequently setting out on their journeys alone in search of a better quality of life. Also, they are often times separated from their families during the course of their passages due to a multitude of risk factors. Most of these children will spend their entire childhoods in exile, not knowing their birthplace, their families, or their own cultural identities. Instead, they will grow up being accustomed to war, violent acts of exploitation, trafficking, and military recruitment ("UNHCR – Children").

Zambia: Congo's Peaceful Neighbor

It is evident that refugee youth in the Congo face inhumane challenges, often without family support. Now, we must ask, why are they fleeing to Zambia?

Formerly recognized as Northern Rhodesia, the nation gained independence from Britain in 1964 to become what we now refer to as Zambia (“Zambia Gains Independence from Britain”). Unlike most of its neighbors, Zambia has been able to avoid conflict and political instability, with no history of war activity (“Zambia Country Profile”). Research suggests that Zambia’s stability has been influenced in part by the rapid economic growth of copper, the nation’s main natural resource (“Zambia Country Profile”). Because of Zambia’s peaceful presence, the country has also taken on the substantial responsibility of receiving refugees from some of its less stable neighbors (“Zambia Gains Independence”).

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), as of December 2017, Zambia has hosted over 65,000 refugees (“As 12,000 Congolese Flee to Zambia, Aid Funds Slow to Trickle”). A shocking 60% of the new arrivals seeking protection in Zambia are children under the age of 18 who are either lost, separated from their parents, or orphaned (“Unaccompanied and Separated Congolese Children”). The UNICEF Zambia Humanitarian Situation Report released statistics disclosing that at the end of June 2018, there were a total of 42,570 Congolese refugees and asylum seekers in Zambia including some 23,000 children. Lacking adequate protection and assistance, these unaccompanied refugee children are among one of the most vulnerable populations affected by the DRC conflict.

It comes to no surprise that developing effective protection strategies is a major concern and top priority for global refugee rights agencies in Zambia. Each organization has a crucial role in the overall support structure for unaccompanied minors working to maintain and defend the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC is the most comprehensive and widely sanctioned international human rights treaty upholding a global commitment to children’s rights (“Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children Outside Their Country of

Origin”). The UN Charter began the foundation of the Convention in 1945 to promote human rights and the “fundamental freedoms ‘for all’” (Background on Human Rights). The last statement in 1959, “recognized that Mankind owes to the child the best that it has to give” (Background on Human Rights). In 1989, the final approval from the UN Member States came as the UN General Assembly adopted the fundamental principles of the CRC stating, “children are neither the property of their parents nor are they helpless objects of charity. They are human beings and are the subject of their own rights” (Protecting Children's Rights).

The ongoing revision of strategies and frameworks are evidence of the dedication of Zambia’s long withstanding commitment to the support and protection of refugee youth. While Zambia has a long-standing history of openly accepting refugees, its current President Edgar Lungu is continuing to lead a new wave of refugee-friendly policies that is committed to honoring and protecting refugee populations (Maple). As a result, Zambia has recently created Mantapala, a new kind of permanent settlement for refugees arriving from the DRC (Maple). Now, there are currently three main refugee sites in Zambia: Mayukwayukwa, Meheba, and the newest site, Mantapala, a permanent settlement (Mawere).

1.6 Fieldwork Site: Mantapala

From August 2017 until January 2018, the temporary Kenani Transit Centre was the main site for refugees, predominantly from the DRC, crossing the border into Zambia through the Cheingi passage (“UNICEF Zambia Humanitarian Situation Report”). Averaging an estimated 150 new arrivals per day, the site constructed to hold only 5,000 refugees rapidly exceeded its capacity, holding about 14,540 refugees (“Zambian President Calls on International Community”). Due to the site’s congestion and dangerous proximity to the DRC border, humanitarian aid organizations implemented a plan in January 2018 to transfer up to 10,000

refugees and displaced people to Mantapala, a longer-term settlement site about 150 km from the Congolese border (“UNHCR Zambia Emergency Update”; “Government of Zambia”). An estimated 1,130 unaccompanied or separated youth were included in the population of refugees relocated from Kenani to Mantapala (UNHCR Interagency Meeting). When I arrived in Mantapala in June 2018, the settlement had been launched only six months earlier and was still in Phase I - the settling stage, yet, it was plausible that over 8,000 children 17 years and younger already resided in the settlement (Musenyesa).

Mantapala, my fieldwork⁷ location, is a refugee settlement site reaching about 5,100 hectares in size with the capacity to host up to 25,000 individuals. Mantapala is unique in that it employs a *cluster approach*, which is a whole society local integration method that provides both the refugee community and local Zambians with equal access to newly developed community resources. The theory of the *cluster approach* indicates that when a large influx of displaced people moving into a community, it essentially displaces the host community as well. By integrating the underdeveloped Zambian community together with the refugee population, both communities can have their basic needs met through whole community development initiatives. UN Commissioner Mawere claims, “it is not just a humanitarian intervention but serves as a community intervention as well” (Mawere). The goal is to create sustainability within the community and improve local attitudes towards refugees. In this approach, displacement can provide as a positive opportunity for growth, healing, and development.

⁷ To fulfill my fieldwork, I partnered with Caritas Zambia, a Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, that defends human dignity and promotes the positive development of vulnerable Zambian communities. With a specialized focus on community sustainability initiatives, Caritas is dedicated to helping refugees become valuable members of the community through access to better long-term livelihood options. Musamba Mubanga, Programme Specialist for Caritas Zambia’s Livelihoods and Climate Change Adaption Programme served as my fieldwork supervisor and collaborative partner, providing essential community connections. See www.caritas.org/where-caritas-work/africa/zambia/.

Prior to my arrival in Mantapala, I was unable to obtain detailed information representing URC in the settlement and my external research with local organizations only lead to more dead ends. In a meeting with Abdon Mawere, Commissioner of Refugees in the Home Affairs Ministry, he expressed a concern for their limited data regarding URC in Mantapala. Randall Musenyesa, UN Commissioner of Refugees, Refugee Officer (RO), echoed Commissioner Mawere's concern for the large gaps of URC information (Musenyesa).

In what began as a research study to discover which programs were supporting and protecting URC in Mantapala, and what kinds of assessments, monitoring, and reporting systems organizations were employing, once I arrived in Mantapala, my observations during my fieldwork meaningfully altered the focus of my research. What I discovered in Mantapala, was the significance of how culture affects both the capacity of refugee youth to develop adaptive coping mechanisms, as well as the capacity of program development to provide effectual support to URC. My research then became focused on trying to understand culture's significance in a child's healing process and the profound impact culturally contextualized support programs can have during a child's resettlement. Therefore, this research aims to examine the following:

1. Why is it important to understand culture's significance when supporting URC in a specific context?
2. How does a child's cultural identity affect how they respond to adversity?
3. Are development programs providing culturally specific support for URC that focus on the culture of the child and the contextual nature of adversity?
4. Is the implication of coping and resilience the same across cultural spheres? And in differing contexts, can these behaviors be interpreted both adaptive and maladaptive behaviors?

Limitations

Before examining the significant cultural distinctions of URC in Mantapala, it is important to acknowledge that because URC have withstood experiences of migration, their

naturally embedded cultural associations and identities may have been lost or altered by such distinctive involvements. For example, Congolese refugees arriving in Mantapala were often detached and suspicious, embodying a substantial misrepresentation from their typical cultural characteristics of unity, compassion and humanity that makes African culture so unique (“Zambia: Whatever Happened to the Spirit of Ubuntu?”). Conducting research in a culture that had potentially been reshaped by external influences, it was important I reflected on URC in Mantapala exclusive of my prior knowledge of Congolese and Zambian cultures. My objectivity was important as I observed pre-migration, culturally embedded behaviors, as well as cultural patterns that had evolved as a result of the child’s cross-cultural migration experience.

Another limitation of my fieldwork was due to the broad similarities of cultural customs among Africa’s vast cultures, tribes, and villages. Often, it was challenging to differentiate between each culture’s norms and avoid linking cultural traits as conducts relating to one broad group ie. sub-Saharan Africa. Although many cultures in sub-Saharan Africa share similar values, it is still important to denote the specifics of each community that further identify the individual behavioral patterns relevant of each culture.

Chapter 2: Culture and Identity

Lev Vygotsky, known for his Marxist theory of human cultural and bio-social development, theorizes that "all psychological phenomena originate through interpersonal interaction, and hence, social and cultural context provide the framework for how children learn to think, speak, and behave" (Boyden and Mann 5). The powerful phenomenon of culture serves as a portal to connect generations of tradition, language, belief systems, and history to shape a child’s uniquely assimilated identity. Culture, defined as “the collective mental programming of

the human mind,” is then, a collective experience that influences a child’s mental process in relation to a physical and social context (Hofstede et al. 6). According to Schuff, “We cannot try but to make sense of our worlds, each other and ourselves through cultural interaction" (6). Identities and belief systems are generally socially constructed within a cultural context that link a child's development to the traditions of their heritage. Yet, for a child of migration who may lack attachment to a familiar cultural heritage, cultural identity development can be an isolating and confusing experience because they "are distant, and yet they belong. Their difference is internal to the culture” (Volf 49). Thus, the separating and binding experience of an unaccompanied minor distinguishes culture as “not a mere variable in human cognition but a major generative force" (Boyden and Mann 20). To succeed in connecting with and supporting uprooted children moving between cultures, we must recognize that their identity cannot be fully interpreted without first understanding culture’s influence on how they view their own experience, as well as the world around them.

Understanding culture and identity is important so that development programs can find the most effective ways to support URC to feel heard and supported during their resettlement process. The following section will examine the significance of understanding culture’s influence on an unaccompanied minor’s identity after enduring the complications involved in a cross-cultural migration experience (Schippers 43). I will explore the challenges and strengths of embodying an integrated cultural identity, examine shifting cultural patterns, and review cultural diversity through Hofstede’s national culture index, specifically looking at the strengths and limitations of high power and collectivist cultures.

2.1 Integrated cultural identities

Challenges

In practice we see, but also know from studies, that refugee youth with experiences of cross-cultural migration face meticulous identity-shaping stresses (Schippers 12). Children leading cross-cultural lives often face identity confusion and loyalty conflicts to their countries of origin, which make it complicated for youth to adjust and cope in healthy ways (Wernesjö 499). When thinking about the healthy development of an unaccompanied child, it is important to understand the notion of *acculturation*, which is how an “individual responds to the influence of dominant (second) culture” and *enculturation*, which refers to the dynamic process of learning the values and worldviews of a person’s own cultural group (Raman and Hodes 31). Living between multiple cultures requires individuals to adapt to different cultural norms and learn new roles, many times resulting in “the loss of social structures, cultural values and self-identity” (Bhurgha and Becker 19). For cross-cultural children, it can be extremely difficult to achieve a healthy, culturally marginalized identity as they “construe their identity at the margins of two or more cultures and central to none (M.J. Bennett, 2004, p. 8)” (Schuff 8). Individuals require both belonging and distinctiveness to achieve a fully balanced identity, however the disconnect from social and cultural frameworks in an unknown environment can create cultural identity confusion (Schuff 6). Therefore, unaccompanied youth living between cultures, and perhaps also struggling with bicultural confusion, are often at risk of re-traumatization during their post-settlement if not supported appropriately (Schuff 7). Ultimately, “all cultures are hybrid...and encumbered, or entangled and overlapping” (Volf 52). Organizations must recognize this so they can empower youth developing within multiple cultural frames of reference to use their integrated identities as a source of strength during their post-settlement.

Strengths

Up until this point, the description of cross-cultural adaption for children of migration has been problem-focused, circumscribing the vulnerability of unaccompanied youth as an undesirable fault or weakness (Schuff 5). However, in a field where individuality is celebrated and personal self-exploration is essential to understanding one's authentic identity, cross-cultural upbringings can serve as an advantage for URC. Surfacing within multiple frames of reference, URC embody many positive strengths such as language and adaption proficiencies and expanded world views (Schuff 5). These strengths can be powerful tools for organizations that are prepared to shift their approach to a resource-oriented focus. Croatian theologian Miroslav Volf explicates that, "other cultures are not a threat to the pristine purity of our cultural identity, but a potential source of its enrichment" (52). Children exposed to transcultural perspectives need to be encouraged to realize they are not burdened, but uniquely equipped with a distinct set of skills (Schuff 5). Changing an implementer's approach to acknowledge the potential strengths of youth rather than concentrating on a child's limitations will lead the youth to deal better with cross-cultural pressures and role conflicts (Schuff 4). In this sense, "contradictions that are otherwise often a challenge become a resource" (Schuff 17). When URC are supported to recognize their integrated intercultural identities as practical resources of cross-cultural development, it will help to reduce their negative patterns of fear, otherness, and exclusion that often challenge them during resettlement.

2.2 Shifting cultural patterns

There are many common cultural patterns that make it difficult to differentiate between subcultures in Africa. However, by looking closely through a cultural lens, it is evident that there

are distinct characteristics pertaining to specific culture groups. Recognizing these cultural patterns influences a receiving population to feel they are truly being understood and also provides organizations with insight that allows them to meet the needs of the population group in that specific context. In Zambia, Sampa, a friend with one of the largest smiles I had ever seen, gave me indispensable insight that greatly enriched my cultural interpretations and ultimately, the value of my data collections. He explained that among the 72 tribes in Zambia, Bemba is the largest, making up about 36% of the population (Kapambwe). It is also a recognized tribe in the neighboring areas of the Congo (Lemarchand and Dennis). Sampa is a member of the Bemba tribe, from the province Baku Shilya meaning “people from the waters” (Sampa). By learning distinct tribal characteristics from Sampa, along with a few Bemba phrases, I gained a cultural perceptiveness that allowed me to create authentic relationships with youth in Mantapala when they might otherwise might not have trusted me. For example, although I had a translator with me, I found that, as an outsider to the culture, communicating the few Bemba phrases Sampa taught me went a long way towards developing trust and acceptance with refugee youth. While English is Zambia’s official language, Bemba is understood in about half of the Zambian population, as well as in regions in the DRC (Pariona). When I uttered a few expressions such as *mulishani* (how are you/fine), or *napapata* (please), and *natotela* (thank you), even with my *mzungu* (white person) pronunciation, faces lit up, tensions eased, and I was able to connect on a more profoundly deeper level (Everisto). Additionally, learning the phrase *abana banshiwa* (children without parents) allowed me to explain my purpose to refugees directly without a disconnection from the translation interchange (Everisto). As an outsider, understanding the cultural patterns in Mantapala provided me with the cultural competence to more clearly see the challenges URC endure from their own perspectives.

What, then, are the specific socio-cultural aspects of a refugee youth fleeing from the DRC into Zambia that aid organizations need to recognize? (Kanu 917). In terms of mental health, understanding a few key Congolese social customs will affect how well programs are able to care for unaccompanied youth during their post-settlement (Espinoza 2). To expound on this concept, I will refer to the different perceptions of mental illness across cultural contexts. A Congolese group called Butembo in the North Kivu Province in the DRC often refer to mental illnesses through a vastly different perspective than from Westernized diagnoses (Espinoza 2). For instance, a child showing signs of psychotic behavioral disturbances such as getting naked in public places, laughing at inappropriate moments, or eating inedible objects, would set off a major alarm for westernized aid organizations lacking contextualized understanding of the Butembo people (Espinoza 2). In actuality, Butembo people are accustomed to witnessing these behavioral tumults in their culture (Espinoza 2). While western cultures may be highly concerned with what they see as psychotic behaviors, the Butembo people are not alarmed by this conduct; instead, they are empathetic towards those they consider to be disturbed by social isolation and profound sadness (Espinoza 2). Rather than seek medical attention, the Butembo culture acts “to ensure the person is not alone, and involve him in communal work in the village” (Espinoza 3). Ultimately, the lack of cultural interpretation of mental illness across dissimilar cultures can make it difficult for refugee youth to feel heard and understood, and it also limits organizations to provide appropriate interventions when they cannot understand how a child views his or her own symptoms. Such culture traits are important to know in order to effectively support populations of Congolese refugee youth in Mantapala (Espinoza 2).

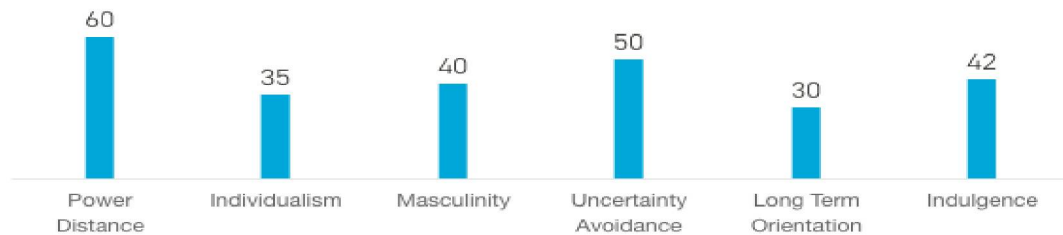
2.3 Cultural Diversity: Hofstede's Six Dimensions of National Culture

As mentioned previously, distinguishing the vast cultural distinctions across African tribes and villages can be challenging for a non-native. However, organizations can better equip themselves to understand Africa's explicit societies by studying the work of Professor Geert Hofstede, a Dutch social psychologist known for his profound research on cultural evolution and societal change. Hofstede's Six Dimensions of National Culture is one of the most comprehensive frameworks for measuring cultural disparities across nations. The tool measures culture in the following categories: Power Distance Index (PDI), Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity vs. Feminism (MAS), Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), Long-term Orientation vs. Short-term Orientation (LTO), and Indulgence vs. Restraint (IND) ("National Culture"). In recognizing these cultural differences, aid organizations will be a major resource to provide more culturally contextualized support for URC in Mantapala.

Table 1. displays an overview of Zambian culture through the lens of Hofstede's dimensional framework ("Country Comparison"). In the following sections, I will analyze discoveries from my fieldwork in Mantapala by examining Hofstede's assessment of Zambian culture regarding Power Distance Index (PDI) and Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV). While the National Culture Index does not specifically interpret Congolese culture, I have included information from outside sources, as well as from my own personal observations and interactions, that illustrate the country's specific cultural indices.

Table 1:

Country Comparison: Zambia



Zambia

Source: Country Comparison: Zambia, *Hofstede's Indices*, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/zambia/>. Accessed 14 Dec. 2019.

Power Distance Index (PDI)

The Power Distance Index (PDI) describes how a country's culture justifies "how to handle the fact that people are unequal" (Hofstede et al. 55). Zambia has a PDI score of 60, placing an intermediate value on hierarchal status, dependence, centralization, and power in the hands of the privileged (Hofstede et al.76). Alternatively, countries with a low PDI value the equality of rights and prefer interdependence between the power classes (Hofstede et al.72). From my observations in Mantapala, Congolese culture demonstrates a comparable power value. While foreign influences and the growth of market economy often generate competition, power is generally not challenged in the Congo unless in severe conditions (Sergemuhima).

In Mantapala, this power dynamic was presented in both the Congolese and Zambian cultures, specifically within the roles and responsibilities assumed by the URC who lived in child-headed households. Bame Nsamenang, one of Africa's great psychologists explains,

“social responsibility [is] considered essential in the raising of [African] children capable of upholding cultural scripts, and feeling a healthy sense of belonging” (Stratton 121).

Demonstrating this social responsibility, the URC in the child-headed households I observed each saw their roles as culturally implicit — the older children taking on the parental roles without questioning the order of household hierarchy. As a practitioner developing strategies for youth in high power cultures, I have found that allowing children to resume these hierarchal roles in their post-migration phases will help them to preserve their sense of worth and feel fulfilled in maintaining their cultural customs. The continuation of these cultural norms can have substantial effects on a URC’s adaptive experience acculturating in a host culture.

Limitations in a High Power Culture

While there are advantages that coincide with a high power dynamic, there are also challenges. During a home visit conducted with Napanzi, a Zambian psychosocial counseling officer from Lifeline/Childline Zambia, I saw these challenges revealed in various ways. The objective of the home visits were to monitor previously identified URC, make sure their basic needs were being met, and gauge the psychosocial support services each child required. One home we visited housed a child-headed household of five Congolese URC (See fig. 8).

Figure 8:

Child Headed Household in Mantapala



Child Headed Household in Mantapala. Mantapala Home Visit, photographed by Jesse Nathanson, 13 July 2018.

During the visit, the eldest, a 16-year old Congolese URC named Kilouva, continually cut the other children off from replying to our questions. It was evident that she wanted to regulate control of our analysis. While she may have meant well, her interjections were limiting the impact of our exchange. Although the exact reason for her actions remained unknown, Napanzi eventually asked Kilouva to separate herself from the group so the other children could have an equal opportunity to respond. This power dynamic may have been the outcome of what Hofstede identifies as acquiescence, the tendency of respondents in collectivist communities to give generally positive answers regardless of the question (Hofstede et al. 101). Withdrawn at first, the children slowly became comfortable to answer questions more openly, significantly enriching the value of our data collection.

Another limitation of a high power-index culture was displayed during these home visits when I recognized that Napanzi did not use a questionnaire template, nor was he documenting his findings. When I inquired, he replied he was aware of UNHCR's child protection assessment guides, but that he had not been given any template. Additionally, he said that he wrote down follow-ups from the home visits in a notebook once he got back to his desk each day.

In preparation for my fieldwork, I designed a URC Questionnaire for unaccompanied minors based on the UNHCR's Best Interests Assessments (See Appendix A). Best Interests Assessments represent the core values of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ensuring that each child is granted appropriate protection based on his or her specific needs (Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) (UNHCR Emergency Handbook). The Best Interest process has two components: BID⁸ (Best Interest Determination) and BIA⁹ (Best Interest Assessment). Organizations can benefit from best interest approaches that not only seek information about the children's immediate needs, but that also seek to understand a child's interpretations of their migration experience through their own cultural lens. When I showed Napanzi my previously formulated template, he agreed that it was a helpful tool, and for the remainder of the home visit, Napanzi and I used my self-created template.

Reflecting on this experience, I consider how Zambia's power index influenced Napanzi and other Zambian aid workers to accept their appointed roles without taking advantage of their

⁸A BID determines the child's best interests on the occasion of particularly important decisions that affect the child. A BIA should permit the child to participate, should be conducted by decision-makers with relevant expertise, and should balance all relevant factors to determine the best option (UNHCR Emergency Handbook).

⁹ A BIA is an assessment of an individual child, designed to ensure that the child's best interests are the foremost consideration. A BIA must be conducted by staff with adequate training and with participation of the child in the process. A BIA should take place as soon as a child is found to be at risk; it can be reviewed and updated regularly until a durable solution is implemented (UNHCR Emergency Handbook).

unique positions to extrapolate how systems could be improved. Additionally, I question how my own cultural background had impacted the home visits. Because I identified with a high power culture and Napanzi associated to a low PDI, I wondered if Napanzi truly believed that my suggestion to use my self-created template was helpful, or if he was simply being polite? Regardless of our cultural disparities, analyses from aid workers such as Napanzi's are fundamental for making structural changes because of their explicit, hands-on interactions with conflict-affected populations.

Recognizing a youth's cultural background is a significant component to determining his or her best interest. As discussed above, although Kilouva was obeying her cultural duties to protect the other youth in the household, her protection limited not only the rights of the other children to speak, but also our ability to define Kilouva's own needs. These defined needs are a major force that can assist and inform organizations in Mantapala seeking to establish more suitable support system for these youth. "Without this expansion and contextualization, we anticipate important negative implications for policy and practice such as the imposition of cultural hegemony on program development" (Ungar and Liebenberg 144). It is important that support programs regard cultural indexes such as power distance; however, it is essential that the humanitarian actors on the ground are not limited by these indices, and are still are encouraged to speak openly in order to develop appropriate recommendations for child protection.

Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV)

Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV) is the second cultural index in African communities that is essential for developers hoping to create more contextualized solutions for URC. Hofstede's IDV index explains how people's cultural self-image is defined in terms of either "I" or "we" ("Country Comparison"). Understanding these relational and interdependent patterns of

culture can provide organizations with intimate methods of knowing and understanding how to engage successfully with refugee youth from particular African cultures (Onsando and Billett 3). Zambia, scoring a 35 on the IDV index, is considered enormously collectivist; community and loyalty are paramount within the culture (“Country Comparison”). My involvement with the Congolese refugees in Mantapala indicated that the Congolese culture also embraced a strong communal identity within families, tribes, or clans.

The collectivity witnessed among the Zambian and Congolese youth in Mantapala was one of the most significant cultural findings from my fieldwork experience. Collectivity was requisite in Congolese and Zambian cultures, revealing many positive outcomes for collectively oriented cultures. For instance, in a collective, refugee communities can benefit from sharing their experiences of trauma. The trauma is no longer individual; for “when Africans share their stories of trauma with others, it is no longer their trauma, it is all of our trauma” (Stratton 42). Another strength of the collective culture I observed in Mantapala was the mutual generosity and hospitality among the refugees and local volunteers. Ubuntu, a philosophy central to sub-Saharan African, values the principle of community strength as one of the major building blocks of society. It is guided by the thinking that “I am, because you are” (“Zambia: Whatever Happened to the Spirit of Ubuntu?”). The commonly used phrases such as *ubumuuntu*, meaning “generosity,” and *muhuntu*, “the fact of being human,” set the tone of Mantapala, along with the overarching concept, “*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*”, meaning that a person is a person only through other people (Stratton 109; Ifejika). When I asked locals their thoughts about the influx of Congolese refugees spreading into Zambia, the typical response was, ‘There is no other way; of course, we will support them in our country. If someone needs help, our community will be of service’.

This beautifully generous display of compassion was also exhibited in the kind-hearted URC caregivers I met in section four in Mantapala. Section four is a residential area with homes constructed of tree limbs that were held together with white tarp bearing blue UNHCR letters on all sides. Walking around the area, I noticed a woman sweeping dirt away from her home with a makeshift broom. I remember being intrigued as I watched her essentially sweep loose dirt off hardened dirt. This common task of women in Mantapala was a collective ritual of purity and hospitality, essential in African collectivist communities. She smiled at me as my interpreter, Chanda, and I walked over to greet her with our following of curious children trailing behind us. Through Chanda's interpretation, we were able to engage in a deeply profound conversation that allowed me to identify components of collective culture as an influential resource for URC in Mantapala.

Wiemolo Fagulindo and Kaounda Kaputa, a married couple who had escaped violence in DRC with their two biological children, exemplified the strength of collective Congolese culture and the great impact it has on supporting URC. I greeted them with a smile, "Mulishani." Wiemolo replied, Chanda translated: "bit by bit...surviving" (Fagulindo). Taking great care, Wiemolo rolled logs over so that we could be comfortable to sit and talk together. Marjorie Thompson explains that hospitality in communal cultures is a "matter of mutual survival" and an expression of love that shares not only what a person has but who they are as well (132). Collectively, in a shared circle, we began our discussion.

Chanda translated to me that the couple had taken in an unaccompanied minor when they were crossing the border into Zambia. The boy¹⁰ had been hiding with his parents in a village near Pweto in the Haut-Katanga Province of the DRC when they were suddenly ambushed by

¹⁰ Wiemolo Fagulindo and Kaounda Kaputa asked that the name of the unaccompanied minor they were caring for remained anonymous.

rebels. After witnessing the death of his parents, he escaped into the bush. When asking the parents how accepting the boy into their family had affected their biological children, Wiemolo explained, “He develops same as our children. They talk together about fleeing and compare stories. They like talking with them. No adults.” (Fagulindo). Although the boy described vivid nightmares of war and witnessing death, he felt better when he could talk to his new brother and sister about his night terrors because “they saw the same dead bodies than me” (Boy). Wiemolo and Kaounda believed, due to the collective experience of healing, the relationship the children had formed had ultimately saved their lives. Unaccompanied refugee youth that identify with a collective culture offer many strengths that can greatly affect a child’s acculturation process in a host community. Recognizing how a child’s culture promotes healing is essential - do children approach healing as a communal experience or do they gain more from an individualized therapeutic setting? Answers to this question can aid programs in forming bonds and creating safe spaces for healing to take place.

As we said our good-byes, I reflected on the positive, collective solidarity that is Mantapala. I realized how uniquely functional the settlement was because of the culturally collective nature of Congolese refugees seeking to support one another. Unaccompanied children, as well as the general refugee community, could not prepare for a life as a refugee. They did not get to pack their bags or take refugee introduction courses. Rather, they were suddenly stripped of everything, emotionally and physically. Their naturally embedded collective African character to care for others empowers them to find life again after such sudden loss. Collectivity *is* their survival strategy (Donnell 29). New refugees arriving into Mantapala come with news of destroyed villages, confirmations of deaths of loved ones, and news of parents who were still alive. Adults with even a few spare beans or an extra spoonful of maiz meal don’t

hesitate to take in an unaccompanied child and care for him or her as their own. My interaction with Wiemolo and Kaounda helped me to understand that the collective heart of Congolese and Zambian culture was their solace.

Limitations in a Collectivist Culture

Along with the strengths embodied in Mantapala's collective culture, I also discovered some negative effects resulting from the intimately unified community. Coming from a background in social work, confidentiality has been central to my education of child protection protocols. In Mantapala, however, I learned that confidentiality was not principal in program initiatives. I began to recognize this development gap in Mantapala when I was conducting UASC Verification (Southern Africa Region) Assessments alongside Save The Children and Lifeline/Childline Zambia (See Appendix D). In the Child Friendly Space designated to identify unaccompanied minors who had not yet been registered, an assessment table sat out in the open where crowds of people would gather around to listen in on the evaluation. Fig. 10 shows volunteers preparing for the assessments. In the photograph, evaluations were not currently being conducted, and no crowds had yet formed.

Figure 1:

Child Friendly Space



Child Friendly Space, UASC Verification (Southern Africa Region) Assessments with Save the Children and Lifeline/Childline Zambia, photographed by Jesse Nathanson

Initially, the assessment began with standard questions of age, ethnicity, and family member information. However, the assessments quickly transitioned into deeply personal conversations including details about the child's parents, threats to their protection, and the child's experiences of trauma. Difficult as it was to hear the children speak of the sufferings they had endured and the losses they grieved, I was further challenged to watch the children relive their traumatizing experiences while bystanders listened in. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) clearly affirms, "States parties must protect the confidentiality of information received in relation to an unaccompanied or separated child, consistent with the obligation to protect the child's rights, including the right to privacy (art. 16). This obligation

applies in all settings, including health and social welfare” (“Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children Outside Their Country of Origin”). However, UNICEF reports that refugee youth are often hidden within the overall national protection system of refugees and claims that, “there is no strategic focus to make sure we take care of them” (Donger et al. 29). Because of my previous, educational training of child protection, and because of my own cultural predispositions for the right to privacy, I was disturbed by this violation of rights. While I believed these openly communal assessments were violating each participating child’s right to privacy, I *could* however, see that if collectivity was a naturally embedded element in their culture before migration, in contrast, privacy was inconsequential in their post settlement. I questioned this disregard for personal boundaries: was the lack of concern for privacy a product of the close-knit collective culture, or was it yet another privilege refugees have been forced to give up?

Another encroachment on the rights of unaccompanied youth in Mantapala, consequential of a collective culture, came about during a home visit where suspicions of child abuse and neglect were raised. As stated previously, interviews were not private, and occasionally, this lack of privacy limited information gained. For Kalib, a fourteen-year-old Congolese URC, tensions intensified as her male caregiver, his seven biological children, and about twenty-five others stood around us during our interview. When I asked Kalib if she felt safe, she looked at her caregiver, the man standing suspiciously close to her, and then quickly down at her feet, slowly nodding her head. As the interview went on, Kalib became seemingly more distant and reserved. It became clear Kalib was not comfortable around her caregiver. Observant of her mannerisms and body language, I speculated possible emotional and sexual abuse in the household, and was careful not to ask questions I thought would be difficult to

answer in his presence. For Kalib, Mantapala's culturally communal perspective was detrimental to her post migration healing. Additionally, the local volunteers were also interconnected in the strong value for communal involvement as they too stood closely around us. This custom overlooked requisite confidentiality practices that may have allowed Kalib to speak honestly and openly about the trauma she was plausibly still experiencing. Thus, I ended the interview early and asked if she wanted to join the other children in the Child Friendly Space.

The basic standard set by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) declares, "In all actions concerning children . . . the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration" (United Nations). Although the CRC defines what qualifies as child abuse, aid programs working in cross-cultural child protection are often challenged to resolve tension that forms between definitions of harm in child protection practice and customary cultural practices (Raman and Hodes 30). Therefore, understanding the interconnection of culture with URC abuse, neglect, and protection procedures can be challenging and complex (Raman and Hodes 30). Was my western perception of rigorous protection protocols culturally inappropriate for Mantapala's culture? As an outsider to African culture, I was concerned that if I voiced my opinions about regulating stricter protection policies, I would overstep my boundaries and lose the trust of my Mantapala relationships. Yet, if I did not express my concerns, I knew that children like Kalib may be at risk of further abuse. Authors of *Cultural Issues in Child Maltreatment* state the danger of silence in the face of child abuse:

On the one hand, lack of a cultural perspective in defining child abuse can promote the professional's own cultural values and world view as the guiding force in making decisions. Conversely, when definitions of child abuse are totally guided by that cultural

group's norms, the outcome may result in children receiving a lesser standard of care and protection. (Raman and Hodes 31)

When I expressed my cross-cultural concerns about implementing stricter protection strategies to Gladys, a Caritas Mansa program officer, she affirmed it was important that I vocalized my apprehension because it would “help organizations see their own gaps” (Chanda). In sum, how a culture defines and measures child abuse varies in differing contexts, regardless of the IDV index. Relevant organizations need to recognize culture's strong and multi-faceted influences as they seek to interpret child maltreatment across culturally diverse populations (Raman and Hodes 30). Interested programs need further research to understand the relationship between culture and child maltreatment to create culturally appropriate protective aid for URC (Raman and Hodes 34).

Chapter 3: Coping, Resilience, and Trauma

3.1 Culturally Specific Coping Methods

Just as cultural context shapes a childhood, coping patterns, cultural adjustment, and stress responses are also molded by culturally grounded influences (Kuo 23). Psychologist Ben Kuo defines coping as “the constantly changing cognitive & behavioral efforts to manage specific external, and/or internal demands that are...exceeding the resources of the person” (Kuo 18). A refugee's individual experience of migration largely affects the different ways he or she can respond to trauma and ultimately adjust to a new culture. Broadly, a child's “response to trauma cannot be understood by focusing only on individual meaning factors – social, political and ecological contexts must also be considered” (Goodman 1193). By examining contextually specific indicators of coping and resilience, organizations can begin to understand why some youth in cross-cultural transition adapt faster or more easily than others. Additionally,

organizations can understand how to better help unaccompanied refugee children (URC) interpret their own coping methods so as to constructively assess how these methods may be helping or hindering their own healing process. As a practitioner supporting trauma-affected youth, I find it is critical to understand that each society has its own idea of what constitutes a coping behavior as positive or negative (Boyden and Mann 12). What is considered to be a strength in one cultural context may be discounted in another community as unconstructive conduct. To support unaccompanied minors in Mantapala, developers must first examine the role of culturally specific coping mechanisms central to refugees in the region.

A study examining a group of unaccompanied Somali boys exiled in Canada offers an example of the wide range of cross-cultural coping patterns and shows why it is important to be familiar of them when working in a specific population (Boyden and Mann 16). In Somali culture, it is customary that boys participate in “traditional pastoral nomadic practice[s]” as they are often sent off at a young age to tend herds and learn skills of self-sufficiency and autonomy (Boyden and Mann 16). This finding shows that in some African cultures, specific adaptive behaviors of coping exhibited in URC may have evolved from cultural principles valuing a child’s rite of passage in early stages of development (Boyden and Mann 16). While in some Westernized societies, exile and separation of youth are considered forms of deprivation or neglect, other cultures endorse “active management of adversity” by training children to cope with trauma on their own through problem solving and self-management behavior (Boyden and Mann 16). Thus, the study found the refugee boys from Somalia as far more resilient than predicted (Boyden and Mann 16).

This assessment shows the significance of culture’s influence on how children develop coping behaviors in Somalia. Now, we must ask how do cultural differences in coping patterns

vary among culturally diverse populations (Kuo 18)? Specifically, what adaptive or maladaptive coping behaviors influence the healing process for unaccompanied youth in Mantapala? In the following sections, I will expound on these topics and include the most notable themes of coping patterns I observed among Mantapala's Congolese refugee youth; collective coping, emotional suppression, and making meaning. I will also argue why it is vitally important to understand culturally specific coping behaviors linked to Congolese youth, and to those of other refugee communities, in order to effectively support URC in Mantapala.

Collective Coping

Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child explains, "The single most common factor for children who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult" ("Resilience"). Parents generally act as a mediator or buffer to the difficult experiences that young migrants face. Yet, for a separated or unaccompanied child detached from a familiar cultural context, the absence of a family dynamic and encouraging support systems further complicate that child's ability to process his or her migration experiences. According to existing research, the lack of connection to family and a sense of community may be more traumatic than the "abject degree of violence witnessed (Garbarino, Dubrow, & Kostelny, 199)" (Betancourt & Khan 5). The interplay between an experience of traumatic migration and a separation from close relationships puts URC at risk of cultivating negative coping patterns and ultimately developing emotional distress or severe behavioral problems (Goodman 1177). Therefore, from a strengths-based perspective, collective coping plays a powerful role in leading youth to develop positive coping behaviors to heal from such isolating trauma.

As healing stems from the foundation of “supportive relationships, adaptive skill-building, and positive experiences,” a child’s connection to community becomes a main factor affecting his or her capacity to develop healthy coping behaviors (“Resilience”; Boyden and Mann 6). The previously mentioned African Bantu word ‘ubuntu’, or ubumuuntu in Kinyarwanda, conceptualizes the collective philosophy that is central to sub-Saharan African culture (Stratton 96). Ubuntu requires a “commitment to values that allow for culture to reverberate with meaning, texture, and rhythm that weaves African families and community together” (Stratton 97). Building on this naturally embedded communal aspect within African culture, healing through collectivity and connection is an influential cultural coping tool that instills the empowering thought that “what is happening is not happening to me alone” (Goodman 1183). Because Congolese culture encompasses such strong relational value for community and unity, encouraging collective coping techniques in Mantapala allowed youth to find authentic meaning in their own culture and traditions while also enabling restoration and recovery so that healing could take place (Streets 6). By creating social support, encouragement, and cultural belonging, the isolating experience of trauma is removed as it gives space for URC to communally process emotions dealing with grief and hardship in community. When supporting URC, developers must understand that it is important to recognize each child’s connection to community to identify that not all children experience trauma in the same way, depending on their strength of communal support or, lack of it (Betancourt & Khan 6).

However, while connection to others in a shared community can be natural for some African societies, it can be unpleasantly subjecting in others. Generally, communal social support is one of the most common themes of refugee culture, yet “talking about trauma within the family is uncommon” among particular refugee African communities (Kiteki 4). Although

community support may be, for some, a valuable coping strategy, for others, it may cause distress and shame. Depending on the cultural context specific to a child's heritage culture, collective coping, then, may instead, lead a child towards emotional suppression. Without this background knowledge of the differing cultural values pertaining to the specific culture of each child, humanitarian actors may find it difficult to effectively engage with and support the unaccompanied youth they hope to serve. It is essential that aid programs specifically address not only the unique circumstance of a URC removed from a familiar family-like unit, but also have the competency to navigate the youth's ethnic customs and identities. In this way, developers can help unaccompanied minors to engage in healthy collective coping behaviors that encourage cultural connection they can value as their own (Fathi et al. 1).

Emotional Suppression

Emotion is another variable in which culture influences the coping behaviors of URC. While some interpret emotion as biologically based or universally constructed, advanced research shows that the fluctuating aspects of emotion are more so subjective to environment and socio-cultural differences (Lim 105). In this manner, given a specific cultural context, the role of culture can determine how individuals feel and express their emotions (Lim 105). It also shows that culturally specific populations experience the emotional state that is "considered to be ideal in their culture" (Lim 107). For example, a cross-cultural study on the emotion of happiness found that Americans identify happiness with being upbeat, whereas Chinese people view happiness as being serious and reserved (Lim 107). This study shows that cultural differences can influence how the same emotion is interpreted across varying contexts, and furthermore, can allow a person to generate different coping behaviors.

Nangyeon Lim, professor of psychotherapy, argues that “to experience emotion, people first experience physiological arousal and then they label this arousal as emotion” (106). Cross-cultural differences in emotional arousal levels are often emphasized when differentiating between Western (high arousal emotions) and Eastern cultures (low arousal emotions) (Lim 106). In the aforementioned study on happiness, American culture displayed a high arousal state while Chinese culture identified with a low arousal emotion. The concept behind this theory also corresponds to the distinct emotional states associated among individualist and collectivist cultures (Lim 107). In collectivist cultures such as the Congo and Zambia, the culture generally identifies with low arousal emotions, and associate with coping behaviors such as emotional suppression or distraction when faced with adversity. This evidence authenticates the emotional suppression I observed among Mantapala’s chronically traumatized youth as a major coping behavior.

While emotional detachment can appear to be a negative coping mechanism, Janice Goodman explores an alternate perspective in a study on Sudanese URC. Goodman advocates that emotional suppression can in some ways help youth exposed to trauma by “altering an unbearable reality” (1192). When a person keeps their mind focused on survival, emotional constriction becomes a critical method of adaption (Goodman 192). This concept is represented in Goodman’s interviews with Sudanese youth as they explain, “You can’t spend two days without seeing a dead body” and “thinking too much was connected to dying” (Goodman 1186, 1184). Another child professed, “If you keep something in your heart you can die of thinking” (Goodman 1185). Goodman’s analyses uncovers how, for children in certain cultural contexts, detachment can be considered as a survival technique that can help children manage their (low arousal) emotions.

Although the ambiguity of unknown outcomes in Congolese culture serves as a powerful coping tool, alternatively, it may encourage negative suppression of traumatic involvements and past recollections without first processing the weight of those experiences. For example, many of the caregivers I spoke with in Mantapala exhibited avoidance and suppression when addressing the traumatic memories affecting the URC they were caring for. When I asked how they were able to help their uprooted children cope with the trauma they had witnessed, they often said, “I stop them from talking about their parents. I don’t want them thinking about them,” or “I hope later he will forget and grow normal” (Faguindo). During a home visit, Kaounda Kaputa explained that “the best way to heal from trauma is to forget and not talk about it” (Kaputa). When I asked her husband, Weimab, the same question, he said it was difficult to provide coping support for the child when he, himself was trying to forget witnessing the death of his own biological son.

While avoidance temporarily serves as a strength for victims exposed to intense mental and physical stress, when no longer in imminent danger, it may result in maladaptive coping patterns of avoidance that are poorly understood. It is important to understand coping behaviors specifically associated with receiving populations in order to formulate the most applicable forms of support. Furthermore, these support systems need to be applied in a way that both the service providers and service receivers can identify with. Although I recognize my views are partial to my individualistic and westernized cultural background, my concern for refugees’ suppressing such profound traumatic experiences was substantial during my fieldwork in Mantapala. The emotional suppression I witnessed there indicated a need for further research on culturally appropriate program development focused on effective emotional regulation patterns.

Making Meaning

Culture substantially influences the different ways in which a refugee youth makes meaning of “the cause of misfortune, definitions of suffering, and ways of dealing with distress” (Boyden and Mann 15). For instance, the meaning of death changes considerably across cultural contexts (Boyden and Mann 15). Contingent on an individual’s association to a culture or religious affiliation, views about death are “built on the notion of congruence, not merely in the functioning of mind and body but also between the human, natural, and spirit worlds” (Boyden and Mann 15). This description implies that in some cultures, death and sickness are denoted as supernatural entities caused by witchcraft from ancestral spirits, views that may not carry the same weight in other cultures (Boyden and Mann 15). Therefore, rather than labeling a child forced into militia activity or sexual behaviors as a perpetual culprit or criminal, some African cultures often refer to these children as *cen*, “mad”; temporarily possessed with evil spirits (Boyden and Mann 16). Shifting perspectives in this sense enables a child to better rationalize the violent behaviors they may have involuntarily performed. This altered cultural viewpoint is important for aid organizations to recognize when working cross-culturally because, ultimately, how children make sense of their experiences, can determine their capacity to heal once removed from a traumatic environment.

Religious belief systems are another empowering coping mechanism that stems from a refugee youth’s capacity to make meaning of their suffering. A connection to faith is a powerful tool for refugee youth as it encourages acceptance of uncertainty. Once uncertainty is accepted, it is no longer a basis for anxiety, and it cannot become a source of fear (Hofstede et al. 197). Therefore, a refugee youth’s belief in God can eliminate fear of ambiguity or unknown situations and instead provide safety and comfort during their time of healing. Christianity, the most widely

practiced faith in both the DRC and Zambia, was the only religion I observed during my research in Mantapala. Christian refugees often times create a more manageable situation when they “accept their circumstances as God’s will” (Goodman 1187). Many of Mantapala’s Congolese youth shared similar convictions as they were able to find peace, trusting in the notion that “God decides when you die” (Goodman 1187). While faith allows for a break from the culpability of action and the logic of why, I was concerned that this could be misused to avoid personal accountability. However, in Mantapala this belief appeared to be a positive display of coping because the youth were able to accept their situation as God’s will rather than painfully questioning how God could allow such destitution in their lives (Goodman 1187). Richard Beck explains this principle as he validates our need to “seek rational warrants to justify our feelings...to give ‘excuses’ as it were, for why we feel the way we do in a particular situation” (Beck 63). For refugee youth observing a faith-based perspective, their experience with the divine is regulated by their emotions rather than logic (Beck 67). Therefore, URC who subscribe to a faith in God are able to effectively cope with adversity because their faith removes the logic of trying to understand why the trauma is happening to them.

To fully support an unaccompanied youth across culturally diverse viewpoints, understanding his or her particular faith connection and cultural perceptiveness of trauma is critical (Goodman 1193). Humanitarian actors need to be aware of the differing cultural explanations of death, violence, and bereavement. The complexity of how culture influences a child’s ability to make meaning of adversity in differing culturally specific contexts is an important mediating factor that has been fundamentally overlooked in previous studies (Boyden and Mann 15). More research on this subject is needed so as to avoid cultural misunderstandings

that could ultimately frighten or re-traumatize children who do not understand how to interpret their difficult migration experiences.

3.2 Resilience

Resilience is a “dynamic development process” generated from the transaction between an individual and the influences of their environment (Boyden and Mann 9). Defined as “competence when under stress,” resilience is a positive pattern of adaptation that signifies how a person can cope with adversity and bounce back into a healthy state (Raghallaigh and Gillian 2). While research shows that resilience fundamentally influences how a refugee child can overcome adversity, research also finds that “resilience might reside in social context as much as within the individual” (Goodman 1194). Because environment significantly influences an individual’s capacity to show resilience, this culturally based phenomenon is a challenge for organizations to observe or measure (Boyden and Mann 9). The positive elements of resiliency cannot always be compared between individuals and across cultures. “Being able to quantifiably measure this ‘ability to cope’ would then provide a universal indicator of resilience” (UNDP 7). In many cultures and languages, there is not even a literal translation to understand or measure resilience (UNDP 13). Although a universal measure of resilience could benefit organizations working across cultural spheres, it would still not allow us to understand how a person actually achieves resiliency (UNDP 8). While research shows some individuals overcome adversity better than others, it is still unclear whether or not resilience is an essential mediating factor that helps explain a person’s capacity to recover in a healthy way (Boyden and Mann 9). Limitations of existing research on cross-cultural resilience and its long-term effectiveness leaves gaps for organizations that want to use the best methods to encourage resilience in refugee youth.

With our insufficient understanding of resilience, I question what we currently know about resiliency's actual role and effect on a person's acculturation process? Is resilience always constructive, or can it also result in maladaptive coping patterns? (Kuo 17, 23). It is important that aid programs do not subscribe to an over-simplistic generalization that sees URC as only vulnerable (victims) or only as resilient (healed). Essentially, "Vulnerability in childhood does not necessarily preclude ability" (Boyden and Mann 17). In fact, one does not discount the other but rather a child can be both vulnerable and resilient (Raghallaigh and Gillian 2). For children exposed to extreme risk, their resiliency does not determine them as being a fixed state, just as vulnerability does not always indicate their psychological maladaptation (Boyden and Mann 18). Therefore, programs need to concentrate on each child's specific mechanics to comprehensively gauge whether his or her resilient behaviors are positively or negatively affecting her or her healing process during post-migration (Goodman 1194). Because "protective processes are changeable according to situation and context," humanitarian actors must try to determine the long-term effectiveness of resilience (Boyden and Mann 18). Under certain conditions, can resilience cultivate a positive coping mechanism in the face of adversity and then subsequently become a source of risk once a person is removed from their exposure to that stressor (Boyden and Mann 18)? In other words, "what first looks like resilience (e.g., academic achievement, environmental adaption) might mask underlying distress, hidden by overcompensation in one area to avoid distress in another" (Goodman 1194). To further expound on this idea, I will reexamine the story of Mutiti from the opening section.

In the introduction, I presented Mutiti's resilience as a model of positive adaption and a constructive measure of a child's coping capacity. However, as my extensive research on resilience continued past my fieldwork experience in Mantapala, I question if I made a grave

mistake as a humanitarian actor who largely overlooked the context that generated, from what I interpreted as, a positive coping behavior.

Pat Ogden, a pioneer in somatic psychology, states, “In trauma, we need to utilize hyper or hypoarousal to fuel adaptive mobilizing and immobilizing defensive strategies” (Ogden 40). To overcome an occurring trauma when a person is immobilized by fear, a person’s fear triggers his or her flight or fight response. In situations where a flight or fight response occurs in the face of adversity, strong emotions of threat rise that enable a person to carry out relentless ways of coping and “aggressive actions of protection” to maximize their chance for survival (Ogden 39). Initially, I was in awe of Mutiti’s coping patterns, cultural adjustment, and stress response, and I was amazed at his fierce resilience as he so calmly recited the traumatic events he experienced (Kuo 18). When Mutiti witnessed militia groups invade his village, his active defenses of fight or flight mobilized him, and he became firm and focused, employing a resilient defense mechanism to survive. If he had stayed to mourn the loss of his parents, he, too, would have been killed. This resilience, this active defense strategy, saved his life. However, in Mantapala, far removed from this traumatic state of emergency, Mutiti still held firm to his outwardly hardened coping behavior that allowed him to dissociate from a healthy reflection of his pain and anger. Consequently, he had developed a habitual autonomic response to all he had suffered, and he was caught in a prolonged, dysregulated emotional state (Ogden 40).

I now realize Mutiti’s “unemotional retellings reflect[ed] the strategies of suppression” (Goodman 1185). Furthermore, I recognize that, “emotion was largely edited out of [his] consciousness... as a way to avoid the difficult feelings that [his] memories of trauma and loss engendered” (Goodman 1185). Mutiti’s adaptive resilience helped him to overcome such acute trauma in the moment, yet, controlling his feelings so intensely afterwards held him back from

authentic healing. For trauma survivors, the coping mechanisms that ultimately may have saved their lives in the presence of life-threatening danger could alternatively, hinder their process to heal in a healthy way. "Without taking the time to contextualize measures and grow them through dialogue within and between cultures, we cannot know whether resilience researchers have overlooked unique aspects of psychological functioning related to positive development under stress" (Ungar and Liebenberg 127). Learning from my massive oversight, I now understand the broader picture: organizations that blindly help youth to become resilient before reckoning with their traumatic experiences and hidden emotional responses to them may well find that this 'encouraged resilience' can be more detrimental than helpful in a URC's healing process. Goodman states, "If coping is only temporarily effective... what looks like resilience might, in fact, be nonadaptive in the long run. Resilience must be viewed not as a static condition but as 'being in dynamic transaction with intra- and extraorganismic forces (Cicchetti & Garmexy, 1993, p. 499)" (Goodman 1194). So, what at first seemed as a strength in Mutiti's composed retelling of his experience, it may ultimately be a negative coping behavior that actually indicated his maladaptation, emotional suppression, and disconnect.

In sum, children who appear strong and resilient in the face of danger may not always be able to address their emotional trauma and heal properly in the longer term (Boyden and Mann 18). Therefore, I ask the question, what exactly are the outcomes programs aim to achieve when encouraging URC to build resilience? In asking this question, we can better gauge if programs are essentially doing more harm than good, not only momentarily, but also in the long run (Hardin 9). Ultimately, more research on the topic is needed not only at the theoretical level, but at the empirical level as well (Boyden and Mann 18).

Recommendation

Culturally Contextualized Training and Support

The way children respond to stressful life events is unique to each of them depending on their life experiences, cultural backgrounds, and connection to support systems. Aid organizations must be aware of these influences and also understand that because coping, resilience, feelings, and symptoms all change across social and cultural spheres, so should the approaches of their programs. When these socio-cultural differences are not taught or communicated, they automatically present an obscure perception of a population group that can easily be misinterpreted. A lack of cultural competency training can lead to further confusion between organizations and receiving populations, ensuing significant detrimental effects for URC. Organizations must learn that “simply exporting a method [of support] from one cultural group to another is inadequate” (Sue et al. 3). It is critical that aid organizations consider the refugees’ specific cultural context as well as their cultural perspective as a main priority. As a result, the boundaries that mark their identities will not be barriers, but instead, cultural bridges to understand the children’s specific needs (Volf 66).

While the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) does employ an extensive global framework that defines and delivers a systematized policy to uphold the rights of children, still, “child protection remains an uncertain art” (Boyden and Mann 4). However, we have begun to understand that the most important component for a successful agency supporting URC is recognizing that the adversity uprooted children experience is inseparable from the cultural contexts in which they live (Boyden and Mann 4). In this way, organizations can avoid making ill-informed judgments and using ‘one-way fits all’ approaches; instead, they can give appropriate, culturally informed support as they work to understand the genuine needs of each

refugee child (Kiteki 14). When organizations succeed in connecting and engaging with the complex cultural identity of each unaccompanied child, it generates a cultural competence that enables programs to meet the specific needs of each child (Donnell 48). The NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice defines cultural competence as a process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures in a way that recognizes, affirms, and preserves the dignity of a conflict-affected person. (“Direct Practice with Immigrants and Refugees: Cultural Competence”). Moreover, cultural competence includes the following:

Knowledge of a range of cultures, histories, world views, values, and beliefs;
understanding of communication patterns and appropriate interviewing techniques;
strengths and differences among and within diverse racial/ethnic groups; cultural expectations and help-seeking behaviors; and the integration of traditional, indigenous, spiritual practices that attend to the spiritual needs of families and children of color.

(“Direct Practice with Immigrants and Refugees: Cultural Competence”)

Culturally contextualized care enables aid workers to understand how culture guides a child’s behavior and interprets the value of his or her culture as a resource and strength (“Direct Practice with Immigrants and Refugees: Cultural Competence”). Culturally competent humanitarian actors play an important role for URC whose migration experience has burdened them with atypical life challenges (Schuff 5). Without culturally contextualized support, uprooted youth increasingly face cultural disconnect in their resettled lives.

As a result of these findings, I recommend that aid organizations increase their intercultural competency training for administrators, NGO staff, and volunteers who help protect, support, and serve unaccompanied refugee youth (URC). Culturally contextualized methods of

consulting, training, and sustainability are extremely important because they provide humanitarian actors with the tools and skills to interpret the challenges of migration from the perspective of each refugee youth (Sue et al. 6). Focused on a long-term vision, intercultural competency training is invaluable. By using appropriate cross-cultural interventions that recognize differing cultural roles and customs, unaccompanied youth can learn to move beyond the trauma of forced migration.

Conclusion

The life-threatening experiences forced upon all refugees is unimaginable. Yet for separated minors who may be detached from familiar cultural connections, it requires a depth of perseverance in facing trauma that I cannot fathom. Unaccompanied refugee children (URC) are a population affected by ever changing cultures and evolving identities; “while change sweeps the surface, the deeper layers remain stable, and the culture rises from its ashes like a phoenix” (Hoefstede et al. 26). I believe it is our righteous duty to honor and protect those in “cultural isolation in a midst of a rejected culture,” so they can be empowered, rather than limited, by their unique cross-cultural positions (Thurman 14). From my comprehensive research on this subject, I have found that the best way to help URC heal is to know and understand their cultural values and customs so they can feel as though they are truly being heard and understood.

In this thesis, I first examined the history of our growing migration crisis to explain why youth are becoming unaccompanied and to identify the systems contributing to their displacement globally. In that process, I looked more closely at Congo’s ensuing violence and Zambia’s long history of peaceful coexistence. By studying each nation’s rich cultures, I was able to recognize the shifting cultural patterns and identity challenges Mantapala’s unaccompanied minors face during their migration in these countries. Additionally, I found

Hofstede's Six Dimensions of National Culture to be a comprehensive tool that can benefit organizations seeking to understand URC's naturally embedded cultural characteristics and the cross-cultural challenges they face. Doing so will help them to be better equipped to explore how the children's cultural perceptions have changed over the course of their migration and, ultimately, to understand how those identifications can serve as powerful tools for the children during their healing process. By studying the different cultures with which unaccompanied children identify, we can discover how and why cultural differences in coping patterns exist among culturally diverse populations (Kuo 18). Having this background knowledge can also reveal how resilience – strength in the face of danger – can ironically evolve into negative, maladaptive coping patterns once the URC are removed from that initial threat. In sum, my research found that improved culturally contextualized training for development programs supporting unaccompanied refugee youth is essential.

Through a specific lens that recognizes culture's significance in how URC make meaning of and heal from their painful migration experiences, this thesis argues that culture is key for organizations pursuing the most effective approaches to support and protect unaccompanied refugee youth. Recognizing the powerful influence of culture reveals the ultimate discrepancy – all refugee youth are not marginalized by the same obstacles, and therefore, they require altered approaches of support depending on their specific cultural associations *and* their incomparable migration experiences. “These children – workers, caregivers, household heads, sex workers, freedom fighters, and so on – have much to teach us in terms of broadening our understanding of well-being and coping in extremely difficult situations” (Mann and Boyden 21). By working to understand the complex, cross-cultural challenges URC face, we can implement culturally

contextualized interventions that will help youth properly navigate through intercultural contexts and authentically heal from their traumatic migration experiences.

APPENDIX A

URC Interview (questions will vary depending on age of URC):

Date/Time/location:

Name:

Age/Gender:

Country of origin:

Length of time on the resettlement site:

- 1) How do you feel today?
- 2) How many meals do you have per day?
- 3) Did you eat and drink water today?
 - i. What did you have?
 - ii. Are you still hungry/thirsty?
 - iii. What is your favorite food?
- 4) Where do you currently live? Can you describe it?
 - i. Do you feel safe there?
 - ii. Do you want to stay there? If not, why? Where would you like to go?
- 5) Do you currently go to school?
 - i. Do you like to go to school?
 - iii. What is the distance to the nearest school?
 - iv. What is your favorite subject?
 - ii. What do you want to be when you grow up?
- 6) Do you sleep well?
 - i. Do you have dreams? Nightmares? Describe them:
 - ii. Can you draw a picture of those images?
- 7) What are your favorite things to do outside of school?
- 8) Do you have anyone that you feel comfortable talking to about personal things?
 - i. Do you worry? What about?
 - ii. What are your concerns, fears, and wishes?
 - iii. Do you believe in luck, chance or fate?
 - iv. How do you cope?

- v. Do you feel lonely?
 - vi. Do you pray? To who? What do you say?
 - vii. How do you take care of yourself?
 - viii. How do you support yourself?
- 9) Are you in contact with your family?
- i. Would you like to receive help to find your family? If yes, which family members? If not, why not?
 - ii. Is family tracing taking place? By which agency?
- 10) History of Separation (if appropriate):
- i. Why did you leave your home country?
 - ii. How did you become separated from your family?
 - iii. What do you fear most about being separated from your family?
 - iv. When did you get separated from your family?
 - v. What was the hardest part about migrating on your own?
 - vi. Do you feel cared for by the organizations in Zambia?
 - vii. Is an organization helping you to reconnect with your family? How so?
- 11) What is your hope for the future?
- 12) Is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX B



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Sample Best Interests Assessment (BIA) Form Identification and Follow-up of Children at Risk¹

BIODATA BOX

Name of the child (+ nick name)	File/Progress Registration #
Date of birth/age	Linked Cases
Place of Birth	Child identified by (officer/agency)
Place of origin	Nationality
Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	
Name of the biological father	Purpose of the BIA
Name of the biological mother	Name of current caregiver
Current address	
Contact details	
Special needs	
Referral/name service provider	<input type="checkbox"/> High Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Normal
Name of assessor	Date of interview/home visit
Email address	Tel #
Agency	Signature
Does the child (or caregiver if appropriate) give informed consent for the interview? ² <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	

¹ A Guidance note (Annex 4) gives a list of questions to be used for the interviews, as well as additional information on using this form.

² Obtain consent at the beginning of the interview with the child/caregiver.

I. Background Information

Ethnicity	
Religion	
Languages spoken	
Level of Education	

Mother ³	
Mother's name	
When did you last see your mother ?	
Where ?	
Where do you think your mother is now ?	
Does she have a telephone # ?	

Father	
Father's name	
When did you last see your father ?	
Where ?	
Where do you think your father is now ?	
Does he have a telephone # ?	

Siblings		
Name	Age/Sex	Current whereabouts

³ This information on family members (mother/father/ siblings-their whereabouts, etc) needs to be collected in case of unaccompanied and separated children. Please, specify, in case the previous primary caregiver of the child is from the extended family.

II. History of Separation⁴

Suggested questions: How did you become separated from your family? (Indicate time, place of separation, as well as causes of separation.) Why did you leave your home country? How did you travel to (name of the country of asylum)? (Indicate mode and route of travel, names of persons who assisted and their relationship to the unaccompanied/separated child); When did you arrive in (name of the country of asylum)? Do you have any relatives or friends in (name of the country of asylum)? If so, provide name, relationship and contact details (if available). Is there anything else you would like to tell about your flight?

⁴ Refer to Guidance note for the Sample BIA Form .

III. Protection Needs & Care Assessment

Living & Care Arrangements

Suggested Questions: With whom do you currently live? (Note names, ages, gender) Is there an adult in (name/location in country of asylum) who is looking after you? If so, note name, relationship, contact information. How did you find this place to stay? How is your relationship with your caretaker and/or housemates? What are your activities (chores) in the household? What are the activities (chores) of the other children in the household? Do you feel you are treated similarly as the other children? Do you like to stay with this family? Are you happy here?

Safety & Security

Suggested Questions: Do you feel safe in this place? If not, what are the reasons/ did any incidents happen (if yes, describe)? Can you describe the place where you are staying? Note the number of rooms, conditions, and how many people are living in the place, etc.

Health & Access to Medical Care

Suggested questions: Do you feel healthy? If not, please, explain type of sickness/how you feel physically. Do you have access to medical care? If not, explain why?

Access to Food

Suggested questions: Do you have a UNHCR/ WFP ration card? Do you receive food rations? If yes, how much and when? Do you think you have enough food? If not, please, explain. What did you eat yesterday?

Water & Sanitation

Suggested questions: Do you have access to clean water? How far is the water point? Are appropriate sanitation facilities in place, where you live? Are there any risks for you?

Education

Suggested questions: Do you currently attend school or any educational activities? Please describe (name of the school/training course, grade, regularity, etc). If not, explain why not. Did you go to school prior to the separation? Do you like to go to school? If yes, what do you like most in school? If not, explain the reasons. Are the other children in the home going to school?

Child's Daily Activities

Suggested questions: Do you play with other children? If so, what do you do and where? How many hours per day? Do you currently work to earn some money? If so, what do you do? How many hours per day? What do you do with the money that you earn?

Protection & Psychosocial Well-being

Suggested questions: Where/ to whom do you go, to discuss problems or ask for help/assistance? Do you receive support from your community? From whom and what type of support? If, not, please explain. Do you feel safe from harm? Do you have any particular worries? Do you sleep well? Do you have nightmares? If yes, how often?

Tracing

Suggested questions: Would you like to receive help to find some of your family members? If so, note whom the child would like to trace and any information the child has about relatives' location. If not, what are the reasons you do not want to find your parents? Is tracing of family members taking place? If yes, by which agency? Have you been informed about the results? Are there additional needs?

Other

Suggested questions: Is there any other information you would like to share with me today?

IV. Home Visits

Suggested questions: Note the name, age and gender of persons present in the home at the time of the visit. Who is currently living with you in this home? (Note names, ages, gender) How long have you been living here? Who prepares the food? How often do you eat? What types/kind of food do you eat? Where do you sleep in this home? How do you spend your time? What do you like to do? How do you feel about living in this home? Are you happy here?

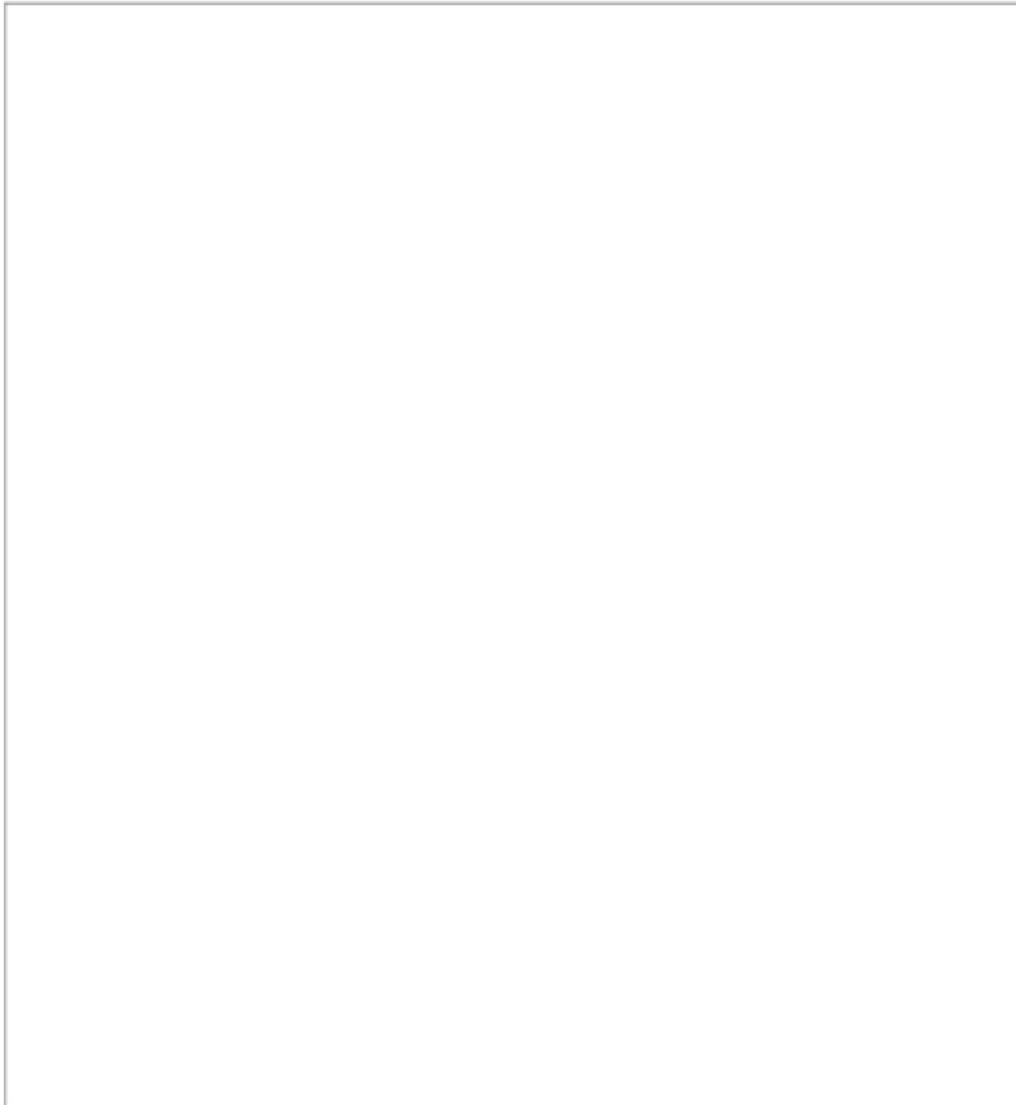
V. Information Filled by the Assessor

Suggested questions: Does the child look healthy? If not, explain. Does the child have nutrition problems? Are there (urgent) medical needs? If so, please explain. Does the child have sufficient clothing? Please, describe impressions about the home. Does the child appear frightened/withdrawn/unhappy (to be assessed/filled out by the assessor, please, provide details)? Are there (urgent) protection needs or risks to be addressed (provide details)?

VI. Verification Interview with Adult Caretaker/Foster Family (only if applicable)

Name of Caretaker	
Gender	Age
Ethnicity	Relationship to the Child
What is the name of the child's mother?	What is the name of the child's father?
<p>Suggested questions: Where did the child used to live? (Name of province, village) How did the child become separated from his/her family? What information do you have about the child and his/her life? When did you first meet the child? How long has the child been living with you? How did the child come to live with you? Are you in contact with the child's parents or other relatives? If so, please provide contact information. How is your relationship with the child? Are you able to continue caring for her/him? Is the child healthy? Is there any other information you would like to share with me today?</p>	

VII. Child's Drawing⁵



⁵ In this part children who are separated can draw a family tree or their previous home. They can indicate different rooms of the family home and who lives in which room. Such drawings help highlight family relations and other useful tracing information. The child can also draw her or his village, their old neighbourhood or town, and draw important buildings, such as their school or mosque.

VIII. Summary and Recommendations

Case summary + identified needs + observations

Recommended Follow-Up Actions/Referral	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Safe haven <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee Status Determination (RSD) <input type="checkbox"/> Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative Care <input type="checkbox"/> Psychosocial support <input type="checkbox"/> Counselling <input type="checkbox"/> Food <input type="checkbox"/> Water/Sanitation <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational/Community activities <input type="checkbox"/> Regular home visits 	<p>Other specific assistance (specify)</p> <p>Need for BID</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Normal</p>

IX. Action plan (order of priority)

Action/Follow-up required	Agency/Service Provider Responsible	Action taken + Date	Status ⁶

Date of next home visit	Date of review of this case
Signature of Child Welfare Officer	Signature of Review Officer
Date	Date

⁶ Indicate in this column the status of the case and mark it in colour, for example: green: on track, yellow: delay in implementation, but not a major problem and red: requires urgent action by management / supervisor of those responsible for follow up and indicate 'DONE' – if all action have been taken

United Nations. "Field Handbook for the Implementation of UNHCR BID Guidelines." *UNHCR*, www.unhcr.org/protection/children/50f6d27f9/field-handbook-implementation-unhcr-bid-guidelines.html. Accessed 25 March 2019.

APPENDIX C



Best Interests Determination Report

Section 1: Overview

Camp/Location	Linked Cases
BID File No.	Case Referred By
Registration Number	

Status of the Child	Purpose of BID
<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied	<input type="checkbox"/> Durable Solution
<input type="checkbox"/> Separated	<input type="checkbox"/> Care Arrangements
<input type="checkbox"/> Orphan	<input type="checkbox"/> Separation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
	<input type="checkbox"/> None of the Above

Priority of the Case <i>(mention reasons)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent	Specify
<input type="checkbox"/> Normal	
Special needs of the child	

Child's Basic Bio-data <i>(refer to registration form)</i>	
	<i>Where relevant, indicate if information is an estimate)</i>
Full name	
Alias	
Age	
Gender	
Date of birth	
Place of birth	
Date of arrival in the country	
Date of arrival at current location	
Nationality	
Ethnicity	
Religion	
Current address	
Registered address	
Current caregiver	
Related case(s)	
Linked BID(s)	
Name of Father	
Name of Mother	
Siblings	

Tracing	
Started on	Status

Interviews		
Person interviewed	No. of interviews	Date of Interviews

	Name	Organization
Interviewer		
Reviewing Officer		
Interpreter		

Documentation Attached
1
2
3
4
5
6

Section 2 : Options and recommendations

Part I – Brief summary information on the case
Please <i>briefly summarize</i> key issues, such as current care arrangement, information on parents and family, and the options under consideration.

Part II – History prior to flight/separation
Please <i>briefly summarize</i> key issues, such as current care arrangement, information on parents and family, and the options under consideration.

Part III – Current situation	
<p>Please describe the current living situation of the child, to include: Current care arrangement, living conditions, safety, relationships with foster parents/siblings/care-givers/other family members; Community networks, education and school attendance; Assessment of child's age and maturity, physical and mental health and any specific needs assessment. Please state who has been contacted and who provided information, e.g. child, family, persons close to child, care-givers, teachers, neighbours, social workers/NGO staff.</p>	

Part IV – Available options & analysis	
<p>Please indicate all the available options and follow-up mechanisms and analysis of each. Please refer to all the factors included in the Annex 9 checklist in recommending what is in the child's best interests, under the following headings: <i>Views of child, Family and close relationships, Safe environment, Development and identity needs</i></p>	

Final Recommendation	
<p>Please provide the final recommendation and reasons.</p>	

Name of the assessor	
Signature of the assessor	Date

Name of reviewer	
Comments by reviewer to the report	
Signature of reviewer	Date

Section 3: Panel Decision

This section should be completed and signed at the BID panel sessions. The signed page should then be scanned in order to protect the information included, attached to sections 1 and 2 of the form and converted into a pdf document.

The Panel

<input type="checkbox"/> Approves the recommendations
<input type="checkbox"/> Defers decision (please explain why)
<input type="checkbox"/> Does not approve the recommendations (please explain why and provide the panel's recommendation)
<input type="checkbox"/> Reopens the case (please explain why, and who requested the reopening)
<input type="checkbox"/> Closes the case

Full Reasons for Decision

Follow-up actions required (tick and specify)

<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer child for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative care arrangements • Protection measures • Educational assistance • Psychosocial assistance • Material assistance • Medical assistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide counseling to the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child • Biological parents • Foster parents/care-giver 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Undertake formal tracing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>explain</i>)	

Comments

Signatures of panel members

Name	Organization	Signature
Date		

APPENDIX D

UASC Verification Assessment (Southern Africa Region)

Location: Section 5 Mantapala, Child Friendly Space

Organization: Lifeline/Childline Zambia and Save the Children

Date: 7/12/2018

Zambia - UASC Verification - Southern Africa Region

>0. Location & Interview Info

0.1 Verification Location

- Lusaka (Urban)
- Mayukwayukwa (Settlement)
- Maheba (Settlement)
- Mantapala (Settlement)

0.2 Interviewer's name:

0.3 Interviewer's Agency/Organization:

- Action Africa Help (AAH)
- Caritas Czech Republic
- Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
- Save the Children
- UNHCR
- Other

>1. Child's Registration Information:

1.0 Is the child registered with the partner?

- Yes
- No

0.4 Is the child registered with the partner?

- Yes
- No

1.2 UNHCR registration number (proGres):

1.3 Child Protection Case No/Partner Registration Number:

1.4: NIA No:

1.5 Ration Card Number:

1.6 eVoucher number:

>2. Child's Bio-date:

2.1 Name of Child (full name):

2.2 Sex:

- Female
- Male

2.3 Child's Date of Birth:

yyyy-mm-dd _____

2.4 Child's Age:

2.5 Is the current address the same as in proGres?

2.6 Is the current address the same as the one in the partner's records?

2.7 If different/Not registered in proGres or with partner, what is the child's current address?

2.8 Phone number:

2.9 Owner of phone (if not child's own):

>3.0 Arrangement

3.1 Is the caregiver different from the person indicated in proGres/partner's registration?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable (child-headed Household)
- Not applicable (the child is living independently)
- Not applicable (Child is not registered in proGres/partner's registration)

3.2 Information on the Caregiver (skip to Question 4 if this is a Child-headed Household/Child is living independently):

3.2.1 Name of Caregiver:

3.2.2. Caregiver's registration number (proGres):

3.2.3. Caregiver's ration card number:

3.2.4. Caregiver's eVoucher number:

3.2.5. Caregiver's age:

3.2.6. Caregiver's sex:

- Female
- Male

3.3. Caregiver's relationship to the Child (Skip to Question 4 if this is a Child-headed Household/Child is living independently):

3.3.1. Is the caregiver related to this child?

- Yes
- No

3.3.2. If YES, what is the relationship to the child:

3.3.3. If the caregiver is NOT A RELATIVE, since when have they known each other? (Indicate years, months, weeks):

3.3.4. Since when is the child living with the caregiver? (Indicate years, months, weeks):

3.3.5. How was the care arrangement established:

- Facilitated by an organization (Government agency, UNHCR, NGO/Partner)
- Facilitated by community leaders
- Spontaneous fostering (during flight)
- Spontaneous fostering (in the camp/urban setting)

>>3.4 Information about the Household (Skip to question 4 if this is a Child-headed Household/Child is living independently):

3.4.1. Caregiver's biological children (indicate number of children):

3.4.2. Other children related to the caregiver (indicate number of children):

3.4.3. Other children not related to the care giver (indicate number of children):

>4. Child who is Registered as a Focal Point (complete this section if the child is registered as a Focal Point/is a Child-headed Household/is living independently):

4.1.1. Is this a Child-headed Household?

- Yes
- No

4.1.2. Is the child living independently (alone)?

- Yes
- No

>4.2 If this is a Child-headed Household/Child is living with peers, how many children are in household?

4.1.1. Number of children that are siblings of the child (Focal Point/Child head of household):

4.2.2. Number of children that are related, but not siblings of the child (Focal Point/Child head of household):

4.2.3. Number of children that are not related to the child (Focal Point/Child head of household)

4.3 Are there any adults registered under the same household?

- Yes
- No

4.4 Is/are the adult(s) related to the child?

- Yes
- No

4.5 If YES, relationship to the child:

4.6 Is the adult unable to adequately care for the child?

- Yes
- No

4.7 Is the child a parent to another child/other children in the household?

- Yes
- No

5. Protection risks:

Indicate if there are other protection risks (select all risks pertaining to the child):

- Unaccompanied child
- Separated child
- SGBV
- Risk of early marriage
- Child spouse
- Pregnant
- Child parent
- Child career
- Serious medical condition
- Disability
- Emotional distress
- Abuse
- Neglect by caregiver
- Out of school
- Engaged in labour/worse forms of labour
- Child-headed household
- Child in conflict with the law

- Substance abuse

6. Details about child's parent

6.1. Information on the child's mother

6.1.1. Mother's Name:

6.1.2. Date last seen:

6.1.3. Mother's current whereabouts

- In Country of Origin
- In Country of Asylum
- In a third country
- Deceased
- Don't know

6.1.4. Is the child in contact with your mother:

- Yes
- No

>6.2. Information on the child's father

6.2.1. Father's name:

6.2.2. Date last seen:

6.2.3. Father's current whereabouts:

- In Country of Origin
- In Country of Asylum
- In a third country
- Deceased
- Don't know

6.2.4. Is the child in contact with your mother:

- Yes
- No

7. Case Priority, Follow-ups & Additional Comments

7.1 Case Priority (SELECT ONE)

- High
- Medium
- Low
- No risk

7.2 Suggested follow up

- Refer to Registration
- Prioritise BIA or further assessment if previous BIA exists)

- Refer to Health Centre
- Refer to SGBV Focal Point
- Refer to legal service
- Follow up Home visit
- Other
- Follow up not required

7.3 Please provide any comments, assessments, analysis or observations here:

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